A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION

OF THE

EPISTLE to the *GALATIANS*.

And from thence forward to the End of the

REVELATION,

In the FORM of a

PARAPHRASE;

WITH

OCCASIONAL NOTES

In their proper Places for further EXPLICATION,

AND SERIOUS

RECOLLECTIONS

At the Close of every CHAPTER.

To which is Added,

AN ALPHABETICAL TABLE

OF THE

Principal Things contained in the PARAPHRASE, especially in the NOTES, of *this*, and *the two former* Volumes.

For the Use of the Family and the Closet.

By *JOHN GUYSE*, D. D.

LONDON:

Printed for JOHN OSWALD, at the *Rose* and *Crown* in the *Poultry*.

M.DCC.LII.

THE GENERAL PREFACE To this VOLUME.

IT is with Wonder, Blessing and Praise, that I humbly adore the God of Providence and Grace for his Preservation and Assistances, unto the finishing of my Design on the New Testament; especially when I reflect, that several much more eminent Servants of the blessed Jesus, and less advanced in Years, have been cut off in the Midst of their Labours of this Kind. And I gratefully acknowledge the Obligations my Christian-Friends and Brethren have heaped upon me, by their candid Acceptance of the two former Volumes, *and repeated Desires to see the Work completed in* a Third; *and by their generous Encouragement to it, when it was advertised, as going to the Press, though no Proposals were published for a Subscription. It has indeed filled a pretty many more Sheets than I intended, or at first expected; but may be commodiously divided between the* Hebrews *and* James, *and may be bound up in two Parts, if any choose to have it so.*

THERE needs, I think, no further prefatory Addition, *than to refer my Readers to what has been prefixed to the other Volumes; and importunately to solicit their earnest Prayers, that the God of all Grace, through the atoning Blood of the dear Redeemer, would abundantly pardon the many Imperfections, which I am sensible attend these poor Performances; and that he would follow the Whole with a special Blessing, for rendering it subservient to the glorious Cause of evangelical Truth, and Holiness, and Christian-Charity; for leading some ignorant, irreligious and erroneous Souls into the only true Way of Salvation according to the Gospel; and for helping them and others onward therein to eternal Life, that God in all Things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.*

THESE, I humbly trust, have been and are my governing Aims in this, and all my other ministerial Services; and if these, through divine Influence, may in any Measure be attained, I therein do and will rejoice, and ascribe the intire Glory of all to the God of my Life, Mercies and Hopes: This will give me the noblest Satisfaction, and maintain the Peace of my own Mind, whatever Censures sceptical, profane, or severe Critics may pass upon the present Attempt, or upon its Author, who counts it his Honour to be a sincere Lover of the Doctrines of Grace, and of pure and undefiled Religion, and immortal Souls, though a very unworthy Servant of Jesus Christ,

London, September 29,
1752.

JOHN GUYSE.

Errata, not observed till after the Publication of this Volume; through excessive hurryings of the Press in the last half of it, are desired to be pasted near those already printed, and to be corrected in their several Places with a Pen.

Page 27. line 7. in the Text, add *believe*. P. 263. l. 8. del. *and*. P. 603. l. 3. in the Note, for *Africa* read *America*. P. 606. l. 15. for *if* r. *it*. P. 646. l. 1. in the Note, f. *Particle* r. *Participle*. P. 718. l. 10. in the Note, f. *and therefore* r. *However*. P. 765. l. 22. in the Note, f. *who led* r. *and leading*. P. 772. l. 23. del. *he*. P. 781. l. 15. after *the Judgments of God*, add *and pernicious Doctrines*, and l. 16. del. *to pernicious Doctrines*. P. 790. l. 36. f. *Euphrates*, r. *Nile*, and in the Note, l. 3. f. *there* r. *here*. P. 808. l. 17. in the Note, f. *all* r. *most of*. P. 832. l. 9. in the Note, f. *which is most commonly thought to be* r. *which, says Mr.* Lowman, *taking the general received Opinion was*.

PAGE 132, Line 3. read *Methods*. P. 136. l. 18. r. *for all*. P. 297. l. 5. r. *Mystery*. P. 472. l. last but one, r. *may be called*. P. 481, &c. mispaged from 478. P. 814. l. 16. for Engagements, r. *Appointments*. P. 840. in the Note l. 8. for Chusa r. *Chiesa*.

THE CONTENTS of the Epistle to the *GALATIANS*.

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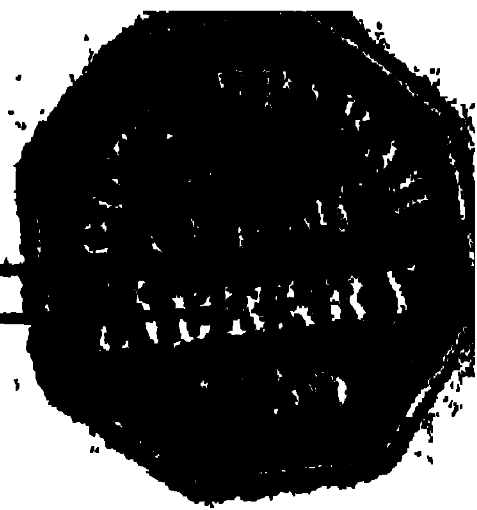
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A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF THE APOSTLE *PAUL*'s EPISTLE to the *GALATIANS*.

In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The Preface to the EPISTLE to the *GALATIANS*.

THE Constitution of Gospel-churches is so different from the *National*-church of the *Jews*, that when the Apostle wrote to Christians that were formed into several religious Societies in *Galatia*, which was a Province of the *Lesser Asia*, he stiled them the *Churches* (*Chap.* i. 2, 22.) and not the *Church* of *Galatia*; and when he spoke of any particular Assembly, that associated together for stated Worship, according to the Order of the Gospel, he constantly called it the *Church* at such a Place; as the Church at *Corinth*, (1 *Cor*. i. 2.) the Church at *Cenchrea*, (*Rom*. xvi. 1.) and the Church of the *Thessalonians*, (1 *Thess*. i. 1.) and the like.

The *Galatian*-churches were planted by the Apostle *Paul*'s own Ministry, as appears from *Acts* xvi. 6. and xviii. 23. compared with *Gal*. i. 8, 9. and consisted, very much at least, of *Gentile* Believers, that were converted from among the idolatrous Heathens (*Chap.* iv. 8.) and had been admitted to all the Privileges and Blessings of the Gospel-state without being circumcised. This was so offensive to *Judaizing* Zealots, and particularly, as appears from *Chap.* i. 7. and v. 9, 10, to some noted false Teacher or Teachers, who probably came from *Judea* upon hearing of it, that they endeavoured, and that with too great Success, to run down *Paul*, by sinking his apostolic Authority below that of *Peter*, and the other Apostles of the Circumcision; and to corrupt the pure Doctrine of Justification alone through Faith in Christ, by super-adding the Works of the Law under the Bond of Circumcision, as necessary for that Purpose. Hence they insisted that, *except a Man were circumcised after the Manner of* Moses, *he could not be saved*, and that he *ought to keep the Law of Moses*, (Acts xv. 1, 5.) And the Apostle himself testified once and again, that *every one who was circumcised was a Debtor to do the whole Law*; but that, to be circumcised with this View, would *render Christ of none Effect to them*, and would subvert the whole Gospel, (*Gal*. v. 2, 3, 4.)

This, as I apprehend, throws a good Light upon the main Argument of this Epistle: It lets us into the *principal Reason*, why the *Judaizing* Christians, that were Enemies to the free Grace of the Gospel, or to Salvation alone by Jesus Christ through Faith in him, so strenuously pleaded for the *Gentiles* being circumcised; and why the Apostle so zealously opposed it: And it shews that not only the Works of the ceremonial, but likewise of the moral Law, were designed to be excluded from having any Share in the great Business of Justification; for Circumcision bound a Man over to an Observance of the moral as well as ceremonial Law, as may be gathered from the Apostle's saying, (*Rom.* ii. 26, 27.) *If the Uncircumcision keep the Righteousness of the Law, shall not his Uncircumcision be counted for Circumcision? And shall not Uncircumcision, which is by Nature, if it fulfil the Law, judge thee, who by the Letter and Circumcision, dost transgress the Law?* (See the Note there.) And indeed in some Parts of both these Epistles (which the most professedly of all others treat on the Doctrine of Justification) several Things are said of the Law, as may be seen in their Places, that must at least include the moral Law; and as these *Gentile-Galatian* Converts were never under the ceremonial Law, nor under any divine Obligation to observe it, they could have no immediate Concern with Christ's *redeeming from the Curse of the Law, and redeeming them that were under the Law*; (Chap. iii. 13. and iv. 5.) unless it included Redemption from the moral Law as a Covenant of Works, and from its Curse.

When the Apostle wrote this Epistle is very uncertain; some think it was before, and others after, his second Journey into *Galatia*, which we have an Account of in *Acts* xviii. 23. However, it is plain from *Gal.* i. 6. that it was soon after he had been and preached among them: And as his principal Design in writing it was to vindicate his own apostolic Commission, and the Gospel-doctrine of Justification, from the perverse Attempts of his Enemies to defeat them; so in the two first Chapters, he maintains that his Office, as an Apostle, was *immediately* from Christ, and no Way inferior to that of any other Apostle; and expresses his great Concern, that the *Galatians* were so soon perverted or turned away from the Gospel, which he had preached to them. In the two next Chapters, he establisheth the Doctrine of Justification alone by Christ through Faith in him, without the Works of the Law. And, in the two last, he exhorts them to stand fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ had made them free; to take heed of abusing that Liberty, by an Indulgence of the Flesh; and to exercise various Christian Graces, and practise several Duties, which are indeed common to all Believers; but some of which the State of Things among them more especially called for: And, to leave the stronger Impression upon their Minds, he closes the Whole with an Account of the different Tempers and Views that influenced him and the *Judaizing* Teachers, and with his usual Benediction.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

The Apostle Paul *prefaces his Epistle to the Churches of* Galatia, *with asserting his apostolic Character, in Opposition to such as lessened it, and with a Salutation and Doxology,* 1—5. *Sharply reproves the* Galatians *for so soon revolting from the Gospel of Christ, under the Influence of detestable Teachers,* 6—10. *Proves the divine Authority of his Doctrine and Mission, by the End of his preaching, and by his having received them, not from Man, but by immediate Revelation from Christ himself,* 11, 12. *And, to convince them of this, he declares what he was before his Conversion and Calling,* 13, 14. *And how he behaved after it,* 15—24.

TEXT.

1 PAUL *an Apostle (not of Men, neither by Man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead)*

PARAPHRASE.

1. I PAUL, who, whatsoever some may suggest to the contrary, am constituted an Apostle, not by any Ordinance of Men, as in the Case of Civil-magistrates, (1 *Pet.* ii. 13.) nor in the usual Way, in which ordinary Ministers of Christ are called to, and vested in their sacred Office; nor by the Choice of Men; no, nor by Power communicated to me, as the Apostleship was to *Matthias,* (*Acts* i. 23, &c.) by the Intervention of any Man whatsoever*, but I received my Qualifications, Instructions, and Authority for it by the immediate Call and Commission of Jesus Christ, (*Acts* xxii. 17—21. and xxvi. 16, 17, 18.) and by the express Appointment of God the Father, (*Acts* xxii. 14, 15.) who revealed his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Heathen; (v. 16.) and who, by a judicial Act, as well as by the same divine Power that wrought in my Conversion, (*Eph.* i. 19, 20.) raised him from the Dead †, in Testimony of his having compleatly satisfied the Law and Justice, and brought in everlasting Righteousness, for the Justification of all that believe in him.

2 *And all the Brethren which are with*

2. I, and all the Christian-brethren || here present with me, consenting and approving, send this Epistle to the se-

* Tho' *Ananias* foretold *Paul*, at his Conversion, what Use God would make of him (*Acts* xxii. 14, 15.) yet he, being at most but a Minister of inferior Rank, could not ordain *Paul* to the Apostleship: nor is there the least Appearance of his attempting any thing of that Nature: And tho' the Prophets and Teachers in the Church at *Antioch* separated *Paul* and *Barnabas*, to the Work of the Ministry (Ch. xiii. 2, 3.) yet as it was the Ministry, to which Christ had already called them; and as these Prophets and Teachers were likewise Officers of lower Rank than Apostles, *Paul* and *Barnabas* could not be supposed to receive their Commission from them, who only followed the express Order of the Holy Ghost in what they did. (See the Note on *Acts* xiii. 3.)

† *Luther* observes on this Verse, how fitly, and suitable to the main Purport of this Epistle, the Apostle here speaks of God the Father, not as *Creator*, &c. but as having *raised Christ* from the Dead: And we may take Notice, that, in the Preface to his kindred Epistle, with respect to the great Doctrine of Justification, he, with like Justness of Thought, mentions the *Resurrection of Christ*. (Rom. i. 4.)

|| *The Brethren* may either signify those Ministers that were *Paul's* Companions in Travel, or the Members of the Church where he was when he wrote this Epistle.

me, unto the Churches of Galatia.

veral Churches, that by the Blessing of God on my Ministry, were planted in the Province of *Galatia* ‖.

3 *Grace* be *to you, and Peace from God the Father,* and from *our Lord Jesus Christ,*

3. Our Hearts Desire and Prayer to God for you is, that the Riches of his free, undeserved, and forfeited Favour may be extended to you; and that all the spiritual Prosperity, which is included in Peace with God, with one another, and in each of your own Souls, may abound towards you from God the Father, the first Person in the adorable Trinity, and first Mover in the whole Affair of Salvation; and from our Lord Jesus Christ, the second Person of the sacred Three, who, in our Nature, is the only Mediator between God and Men, and is the Purchaser and Dispenser of all Blessings to us.

4 *Who gave himself for our Sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil World, according to the Will of God and our Father:*

4. Who, in his matchless Condescension and Love, freely surrendered his Soul and Body, that were infinitely dignified by their personal Union with his divine Nature; and gave up his great and glorious Self to the most painful and shameful Sufferings and Death, as a propitiatory Sacrifice to make Atonement for our Sins, who deserved nothing but Tribulation and Wrath, that he, on the Foot of Righteousness might by Price, as well as Power, pluck us as Brands out of the Fire, (ἐξέληται) and rescue us, in his Time and Way, from the evil Temper and Oppressions, Designs and Practices of the Men of this World, from all the Iniquities that abound in it, and from all the dangerous Snares and depraved Customs and Fashions of this degenerate Age; as also from the *Jewish* Constitution, which is incapable of giving us Life, and is exceedingly corrupted by the Men of this Generation; and that he might, at length, take us out of this miserable and sinful World itself to a better *. All which he has done according to the eternal Appointment and good Pleasure of God, even our Father, who is reconciled to us through the Blood of his Cross, and who, on his Account loves us, and deals with us as his Children.

5 *To whom* be *Glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

5. To whom, together with his eternal Son †, all possible Honour and Praise, in the most exalted Strains are due, and will be so through all Generations on Earth, and to endless Ages in Heaven, for this unparalleled Work of Redemption, in which infinite Wisdom, Power, Justice, Holiness, Mercy, and Truth, shine forth with united and endearing Glory. For this, as well as for his own divine Perfections,

‖ The Reason of the Apostle's directing this Epistle to the Churches of *Galatia*, without giving them any Character, as he does all the others that he wrote to, seems to be their general Defection from the great Doctrine of Justification alone by Christ, thro' Faith in him.

* As the Word (αἰὼν) here render'd *the World*, signifies likewise *the Age*, or *Generation*; a Turn is given to the Paraphrase, that takes in both these Senses, and that, with some little Variation, includes Mr. *Lock*'s Notion of this present Age. (See his Note on the Place.)

† It being doubtful whether, *to whom*, means Christ, *who gave himself for our Sins*, &c. or God the Father, *according to whose Will* he did it; I have formed the Doxology to both, which is consonant to the Use of it in other Parts of Scripture.

may

may he be glorified as he ought to be, and for ever shall be! *Amen.*

6 *I marvel, that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the Grace of Christ, unto another Gospel:*

6. When I reflect on the delightful and transcendent Glory of this Scheme of Salvation, and on its Suitableness and high Importance to lost Sinners, as the only Way in which they can be saved; I stand amazed, and am grieved at Heart, to hear of your Sin and Folly, in that so quickly after ye had been made acquainted with it, and seemed to receive the Truth in the Love of it, any of you should be carried away in your Sentiments, Affection and Practice, not only from me, who was instrumental in calling you to the Fellowship of the Gospel *; but, which is worst of all, from the blessed God himself, by whose Commission I preached to you, and who, by my Ministry, called you to partake of the Benefits of Redemption, such as Reconciliation with God, Justification and Adoption, and eternal Glory, which are discovered and proposed in the Gospel of Christ's Grace, and are bestowed by his free Favour (η χαρις) on them that believe. I say, it surprizes and troubles me, to think that any of you should be so soon in Danger, at least, of being turned off from all this to a strange and quite different Sort of Gospel, as introducing the Doctrine of Justification to Life by the Works of the Law, together with Faith in Christ.

7 *Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ.*

7. Which, how fond soever some may be of it, is in reality no *Gospel* at all; it being so far from bringing *glad Tidings* of Salvation, that it sets the Sinner's Pardon and Acceptance with God, upon impracticable Terms; and so whatever it may be called, it can, with no Propriety, be stiled another *Gospel*; I therefore pity those of you that have unwarily embraced it; and am sensible that unless ye had been imposed upon by cunning Seducers, ye would never have been drawn into it; but, as I hear, there are some *Judaizing* false Teachers crept in among you, that by various Means distress, shock and perplex you, and would fain over-turn that blessed Gospel, of which Christ is the Author, Subject and End, and would make quite another Thing of it, than it is in Truth; and the better to gain their Ends, they suggest as if *Peter*, and the other Apostles, and even I myself preached up the Works of the Law, with Faith in Christ, as necessary to Justification, (*Chap.* ii. 17—21.)

8 *But though we, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you, than*

8. But this is so far from being true, that I am bold to affirm, that whoever he be, suppose it possible that it should be either myself, or any other Apostle of Christ, or even an Angel come down from Heaven; be he who he will, and

* It seems too flat, and low, and assuming in the Apostle, and too much abating of the Force of his Reasoning, to suppose, with some, that he meant only himself, by *him that called them*; and yet, as he was instrumental in the Hand of God therein, and his Authority began to sink among them, I have taken Notice of his Concern in that Work.

that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

let his Pretensions be what they will, if he were to publish among you any other System of Doctrine for the Remission of Sins, and for Righteousness to eternal Life, contrary to that which I at first delivered to you under the Inspiration of the Spirit, he should be rejected as one accursed of God, and devoted to Destruction.

9 *As we said before, so say I now again, If any* Man *preach any other Gospel unto you, than that ye have received, let him be accursed.*

9. As I have now already said, I repeat it with Deliberation and Earnestness, as a Matter of the greatest Importance. If any one, (ει τις) be he Man or Angel, take upon him to preach up any other Scheme of Doctrine, which he may falsely call the Gospel, but is inconsistent with, and subversive of that which ye professed to receive, and seemed to embrace with Faith and Love when I preached to you, he is to be rejected as one abandoned of God, and is to be disdained by you, as well as by him. Though this may sound harsh, and be very offensive to the Ears of some that may think it a hard Saying; I am bold to pronounce it, in my Lord and Master's Name, that none may dare to pervert his Gospel.

10 *For do I now persuade Men, or God? Or do I seek to please Men? For if I yet pleased Men, I should not be the Servant of Christ.*

10. For as to myself, whatsoever mine Enemies may maliciously say against me, Is it now, after I have been so long converted and employed in the Ministry, and have suffered so many Things for Christ? Is it now, after all, my Ambition, Desire, and Aim in my preaching, to persuade People, in Matters of Religion, to receive the Doctrine of Men, and yield Obedience to them? Or, is it not evident, on the contrary, that I therein labour to persuade them to embrace the Gospel of God, and yield Obedience to him, that he may be glorified? Or, do I make it my Business and Concern to ingratiate myself with Men, such as the *Jewish* Zealots, that I may gain their Favour and Applause, and may avoid their Frowns and Terrors? No, this is far from my Intention; I abhor the Thought; for if I were still to continue to seek the Favour of Men, and serve their corrupt Humours and Designs, as I did in the Days of my Judaism and Unregeneracy, (*Acts* ix. 1, 2.) I should never have listed into the Service of Christ; nor should I now be his faithful Servant, as I profess and count it my Honour, and am above all Things else solicitous, to approve myself to be.

11 *But I certify you, Brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me, is not after Man.*

11. But still further, to satisfy you that I really am so, I assure you, my Brethren in the Faith, and make it manifest (γνωρίζω) by all the Signs of Apostleship, that the Gospel of Salvation alone by Jesus Christ, which has been constantly preached by me wherever I have been, is neither formed according to Man's natural Taste and Temper, or for promoting his worldly Honour or Interests; nor is it owing to the Authority, Contrivance, or Dictates of Man.

12 *For I neither received it of Man, neither was I taught it, but by the Revelation of Jesus Christ.*

12. For I neither received my Commission to preach it by the Intervention of any meer Man whatsoever; no, not from any of the Apostles themselves; nor was I brought to the Knowledge of it by any human Instruction; but both my

Authority

Authority to preach it, and all my Acquaintance with it, were communicated to me by an immediate Revelation from him, who is God as well as Man, even Jesus Christ himself, and *that* after his Resurrection from the Dead (*ver.* 1.) and Exaltation to his heavenly Kingdom, which made Way for its being set forth in all its Fulness and Glory.

13 *For ye have heard of my Conversation in Time past, in the Jews Religion,* how *that beyond Measure I persecuted the Church of God, and wasted it;*

13. For ye cannot but have heard abundantly of my former Behaviour in my State of Judaism, when I was a zealous Professor and Practiser of that Religion, and such a bitter Enemy to all that departed from it, that I cruelly persecuted the Members of the New-Testament Church of the Living God, which in its Catholic Consideration consists of the visible Professors of Christ's Name, wherever they are scattered over the Face of the Earth; and I was so excessively mad and outrageous against them, as to bind and drag some of them to Prison, and cause others of them to fly their Country, others to renounce Christ, and others to be put to Death: In this Manner I made dreadful Havock among them, and did my utmost to destroy them, Root and Branch, (*Acts* viii. 3. *and* ix. 1, 2. *and* xxvi. 10, 11.) like a furious Warrior, when he pursues the flying Enemy, and when he storms a Town (ἐδίωκον καὶ ἐπόρθουν).

14 *And profited in the Jews Religion above many my Equals in mine own Nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the Traditions of my Fathers.*

14. And at the same Time, I was a great Proficient in the Knowledge and Observation of all the religious Laws, Doctrines, and Customs of the *Jews*, even to their most minute Rites and Ceremonies; and laboured to propagate them beyond most of my Years and Standing among my own Countrymen; being more eminently and remarkably zealous than they generally were, or than is commonly known, for all the Traditions of my Ancestors, as they have been handed down from one Generation to another, whether they were such as were founded in a divine Authority, or not. It cannot therefore be reasonably supposed, that so thorough a Bigot as I was, should, all at once, abandon my former darling Sentiments, Temper, and Course of Life, in which I had been educated and riveted from my Childhood up, and should embrace and preach Christ and the Gospel, in direct Opposition thereunto, and to all my secular Interests, without some extraordinary Call and divine Influence from Heaven.

15 *But when it pleased God, who separated me from my Mother's Womb, and called me by his Grace,*

15. But when God, who of his mere good Pleasure, without Merit as foreseen in me, (ἀφορίσας με) had set me a-part for himself and his Service, as he did the Prophet *Jeremiah*, (*Chap.* i. 5.) before I was born, and at the very Time of his bringing me forth out of my Mothers Womb; and who accordingly afterwards, in the exceeding Riches of his sovereign and distinguishing Grace, whilst I was going upon a persecuting Errand to *Damascus*, called me by an extraordinary miraculous Appearance and Voice from Heaven, and by a powerful irresistible Impression upon my Heart,

Heart, to make me both a Christian and a Minister, (*Acts* ix. 3—22.)

16 *To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Heathen; immediately I conferred not with Flesh and Blood:*

16. When, I say, it seemed good in his Sight, who delights in Mercy, to make a clear and full Discovery of his dear Son, in all the Glory of his Person and Offices, Righteousness, and Grace, not only *to me*, by external Declaration, but likewise *in me* by internal and efficacious Illumination, (2 *Cor*. iv. 6.) that I might both know and receive him for the Salvation of my own Soul, and might preach him to the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*; I did not stand to consult the Inclinations, Ease, and Comforts of animal Nature, which consists of Flesh and Blood, nor with the Dictates of human Policy, relating to my worldly Honour and Interests as a Man, or relating to the apparent Risks, Reproaches and Dangers, that I might be exposed unto by complying with this heavenly Call *; nor did I advise with any mortal Man whatsoever about my Duty, in a Case which was made so divinely plain to me.

17 *Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were Apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.*

17. No, nor did I so much as go up to *Jerusalem* to receive any further Instructions or Authority from those, that were called to the Apostleship before me; being entirely satisfied with that immediate Light and Commission, which I had received from the Lord Jesus himself: But having begun my Ministry at *Damascus*, where my Conversion was publickly known, (*Acts* ix. 20.) I went forthwith † first of all into distant Parts to preach Christ to the *Jews*, in the Country of *Arabia*, where no Apostle had been before me, and I had no Opportunity of conversing with any of them; and from thence I returned back to *Damascus*.

18 *Then after three Years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen Days.*

18. Then, three Years after God had made this wonderful Change upon me §, I took a Journey to *Jerusalem*, not to increase my Knowledge of the Gospel, or to have my Commission confirmed for preaching it, but only to make a brotherly Visit to *Peter*, that great Apostle of the Circumcision, that I might have the Pleasure of conversing a little with him, and of hearing what the Lord had done by his and his Brethrens Ministry in those Parts, and of telling them what he had likewise done by mine in other Places,

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* As *Flesh and Blood* is a Description of mortal Man, and the Apostle had spoke (ver. 10.) of his seeking to please not Man, but God; his *not consulting with Flesh and Blood*, may take in his not being influenced by a Regard to human, worldly Interests, as well as his not advising with Men; and so what he here says will be different from what he adds in the next Verse, and will help to form a more beautiful Gradation, than if we take it to be little more than explicatory of this.

† Though the Word *immediately* is placed just before *I conferred not with Flesh and Blood*, (ver. 16.) yet, as Mr. *Locke* observes, it principally relates to *I went into* Arabia, which probably was to preach the Gospel, though not mentioned, that being of no Importance to his Argument, which was to shew that he was compleatly furnished immediately from Christ himself for his Ministerial Office, before he had the least Communication with any one of the Apostles.

§ This was the first Time of the Apostle's going to *Jerusalem* since his Conversion, which was several Years before he became an Apostle. (See the Notes on *Acts* ix. 17. *and* xiii. 3.)

Places, since he had called me by his Grace: And *Barnabas* having introduced me to him, and told him how I had seen the Lord in the Way, who had spoken to me, and how I had preached boldly at *Damascus* in the Name of Jesus, (*Acts* ix. 27.) he readily received me as a faithful Disciple and Minister of Christ, and I tarried with him no more than fifteen Days.

19 *But other of the Apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's Brother.*

19. But I did not so much as see any other of the Apostles, except one, who was then at *Jerusalem* likewise; and that was *James* the Just, who was Brother or Kinsman to our Lord Jesus according to the Flesh: So that there is no Room to imagine that I received my Knowledge of the Gospel, or my Commission to preach it, from the apostolic College.

20 *Now the Things which I write unto you, behold, before God I lie not.*

20. And (λ) as these Things are of great Importance for vindicating my Character and the Doctrine I preach, both of which have been traduced by some among you: Pray observe, I call the great God to witness, and declare with all the Solemnity of a religious Oath in his penetrating Sight, to whom I must one Day give an Account, that all the Facts I am rehearsing to you are strictly true; there is no Manner of Deceit or Falshood in my Representation of any of them.

21 *Afterwards I came into the Regions of* Syria *and* Cilicia;

21. After this short Visit at *Jerusalem*, I travelled into the Provinces of *Syria* and *Cilicia*, some of the Brethren of that Church attending me in my Way thither, as far as *Cesaria*, and sending me from thence to *Tarsus* with the kindest Expressions of their Care and Concern for my Safety, (*Acts* ix. 30.) which shewed their Approbation of me.

22 *And was unknown by Face unto the Churches of Judea, which were in Christ:*

22. But (λ) all this while, I was not personally known to any of the other Churches of *Judea*, that were joined together in the Faith and Fellowship of the Gospel, as Believers in Christ, who professionally, and, in the Judgment of Charity, really are united to him; and so I cannot be supposed to have gathered my Light in the Gospel from them, any more than from the Apostles.

23 *But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in Times past, now preacheth the Faith which once he destroyed.*

23. All the Knowledge they had of me was only by Accounts, which they had received and propagated with Admiration and Joy among themselves, that the noted *Saul*, who formerly was the bitterest Persecutor of the Christians, was now himself a Preacher of those Doctrines of the Gospel, which they believe, and which he before did his utmost to suppress; and so is now become a Helper of their Faith, whom he before endeavoured to destroy for their Profession of it.

24 *And they glorified God in me.*

24. And thereupon they rendered hearty Thanks and Praises to God for the Grace that he had so freely and wonderfully bestowed on me, the Chief of Sinners; and for the rich Advantage that accrued to the Cause of Christ, as well as to my own Soul, by this merciful and remarkable Change that had been wrought in me.

RECOLLECTIONS.

With what entire Satisfaction may we depend upon the divine Authority of the Gospel, which was delivered by the Apostle *Paul*, who has testified, even upon Oath, that he received it, together with his Commission to preach it, not from any meer Man, but immediately from Jesus Christ, who is God-Man! He is evidently *God*, as all ministerial, apostolic Authority, spiritual Blessings, and the Whole of the Gospel-revelation, proceed jointly and equally from the Father and him, in Distinction from, and in Opposition to, all that is derived from Men; and he is as evidently *Man*, as he died and rose again from the Dead: And O how infinitely important and beneficial is his Death, who gave himself an atoning Sacrifice for our Sins, that he might deliver us from them, and from all the Evils of this present World, according to the gracious Appointment of God our Father; and whose Resurrection is a high Demonstration of the Acceptableness and Efficacy of his Death for these great and holy Purposes! On this Foot we may comfortably hope for Grace and Peace from the Father and Son; and if Grace be extended to us, we cannot fail of Peace. But with what holy Detestation should we reject those that would corrupt the Gospel of Christ, and substitute another pretended Gospel in its Stead, for Justification in any other Way, than alone thro' Faith in him! How grievous and astonishing is it, that any, who once seem'd to embrace this blessed Gospel, should be turned aside from it to some other Scheme of Doctrine, which in Reality is no Gospel at all, and never can bring Salvation to them! And how heavy is the Curse that lies upon those that pervert them! But O, what a wonderful and happy Change does the Grace of our Lord Jesus make, when it effectually reaches the Heart! It reveals Christ in them that were utter Strangers to him before; and makes them ready to confess the Ignorance and Error that they formerly gloried in; it turns the greatest Bigots for Superstition and human Traditions, and the most inveterate Enemies to Christ, into sincere Believers; it changes the most furious Persecutors of his People into true Lovers of him and them, and into zealous Preachers of that Gospel which they before sought to destroy; and it makes them such faithful Servants of Jesus Christ, as no longer seek to please Men, by any sinful Compliances with them; and when he calls them to his Work, for which he separated them in his own Purpose, when they were born, and even before all Worlds, they yield Obedience to him, without consulting the Interests of the Flesh, or the Opinion of Men. And O what Matter of Thanksgiving and Joy is it to his Churches, whenever they hear of such Monuments being raised to the Praise of the Glory of his Grace, whether they have ever seen their Faces or not! They glorify God for his Power and Mercy in saving them, and for all the Service to his People and Cause that is done, and may be further hoped for, by them.

CHAP. II.

The Apostle further proves the divine Authority of his Doctrine and Mission by James, Peter *and* John's *owning him and* Barnabas, *as Apostles of the* Gentiles, *and receiving* Titus *a* Greek *into their Christian-communion, without his being circumcised*, 1—10. *Gives an Account of another Interview with* Peter *at* Antioch, *where he publickly opposed him for* Judaizing, 11—14. *And takes Occasion from thence to enter upon his main Point in View, relating to Justification by Faith in Christ without the Works of the Law*, 15—21.

TEXT.

1. *THEN fourteen Years after I went up again to*

PARAPHRASE.

1. AS a further Evidence that my apostolic Instructions and Commission are immediately from Christ himself, I would add, that I never saw any of the Apostles again till

Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.

till eleven Years after my forementioned Visit to *Peter*; (*Chap.* i. 18.) when, * fourteen Years from the Time of my Conversion, I made a Journey to *Jerusalem*, in Company with my beloved Brother *Barnabas*, my Collegue in the Apostleship to the *Gentiles*, (*Acts* xv. 2.) taking *Titus* also, a serious and excellent young Man, and Minister of Christ, along with me.

2 *And I went up by Revelation, and communicated unto them that Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of Reputation, lest by any Means I should run, or had run in vain.*

2. And I then went up to the Church there, not to be taught, or confirmed in my Office, by them, or by the Apostles that were with them; but on an important Occasion relating to the circumcising of the believing *Gentiles*, which some vehemently contended for, as necessary to Salvation. (*Acts* xv. 1, 2, 5. See the Note there) And this I did by special Direction from the Lord †, to maintain the Truth and Purity of the Gospel, according to the Revelation that had been made of it to me: And when I came thither, so far was I from receiving the Gospel from them, that (ἀνεθέμην) I explained it in its full Extent to them, setting it forth at large, as I preached it among the Idolatrous, as well as other *Gentiles*; and declaring what glorious Success God had given me in that Work. (*Acts* xv. 4, 12.) But I did this at first only in a private Manner to Persons of the greatest Eminence and Influence among them, alone and between ourselves, (see the Note on *Acts* xv. 3.) as thinking this to be the most prudent Method of proceeding, lest if those of the *Judaizing* Party should have had a full and plain Account of it, before they had been softened by Persons of the greatest Esteem and Reputation among them, that would own or countenance me in it, they should have raised furious Clamors against me, and by one Means or other should have defeated, in some Degree at least, the good Effect of those Services that I had further to carry on among the *Gentiles*; and even of those that I had already been engaged in with happy Success, and with great Labour, Earnestness, and Concern, like one that lays himself out to the utmost in running a Race.

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* This was not the Apostle's second Journey to *Jerusalem*, when, whilst he was praying in the Temple, he was in a Trance, and saw Christ in Person, which he speaks of, *Acts* xxii. 17, 18. and when he probably received his Apostolic Commission to the *Gentiles*. (See the Note on *Acts* ix. 17.) But what he here speaks of is his third Journey to *Jerusalem*, which he took with *Barnabas* on Occasion of the Dispute that had been raised at *Antioch* about circumcising the converted *Gentiles*, Acts xv. 1—4. which most probably was about fourteen Years after his Conversion, and consequently but eleven after his first Journey thither, mention'd *Ch.* i. 18. And tho' he had been at *Jerusalem* to carry Alms thither, (*Acts* xi. 29, 30. and xii. 25.) between these two Journeys, yet, as he then saw none of the Apostles, it was needless for him to take any Notice of it here. (See Dr. *Whitby*'s Note on this Verse.)

† *By Revelation* (κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν) is understood by some to signify that the Apostle went according to the special Appointment of God, as intimated by the Holy Ghost to the Prophets of the Church at *Antioch*, and to himself, to comply with their Desire of his going on their Message to *Jerusalem*; but others take it to mean, that in this Journey he acted suitable to the Revelation, which constituted him the Apostle of the *Gentiles*, telling the Church at *Jerusalem* what Things he had done among the *Gentiles* in pursuance of it: (See Dr. *Whitby*'s Note). And as the Construction of the Words, and the Truth of the Fact, may agree to either of these Senses, I have given them both a Place in the Paraphrase.

3 But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.

3. But to shew how stedfastly and openly I stuck to my own Principles, and how far I was from going into any Thing, either in my Preaching or Conduct, that looked like encouraging an Observation of the *Mosaic* Law, as necessary to a Man's being justified and saved, I carried *Titus* along with me, as has been said (*v.* 1.) who, tho' a *Greek*, and so a *Gentile* by Birth, was not constrained to be circumcised at his Conversion and Admission into the Ministry; nor when I brought him to the Apostles at *Jerusalem*, did any of them insist on his being so.

4 And that because of false Brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our Liberty, which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into Bondage:

4. And I took this Christian-Minister along with me, without suffering him to be circumcised, on purpose to bear a publick Testimony against the erroneous Opinion of some of the Pharisaical Sect, who, pretending to be Believers in Christ, had come from *Judea*; and, having been artfully introduced, insinuated themselves among the Converts at *Antioch*, (*Acts* xv. 1, 5.) ‖ under the Colour of Christian-friends and Brethren, that they might have the better Opportunity for narrowly inspecting our Principles and Conduct, and for cavilling against that holy Freedom, which we are Partakers of by Christ the only Saviour; and that they might impose Circumcision as a Badge and Bond of Subjection to the *Mosaic* Law, as if he had not delivered them that believe in him from that Covenant and its Curse.

5 To whom we gave Place by Subjection, no not for an Hour; that the Truth of the Gospel might continue with you.

5. This Was such a bold and dangerous Insult upon the Purity of the Gospel-doctrine of Justification alone by Christ, through Faith in him, that how allowable soever in some Cases, and under some Considerations, it may be to give Way for a Time to the Weaknesses and Prejudices of honest Christians, with Regard to the Circumcision of *Jewish* Converts; (See the Note and Paraphrase on *Acts* xvi. 3.) yet when the false Brethren insisted on *Gentile*-believers being circumcised, and so brought under an Obligation to keep the whole Law of *Moses*, in Order to their Acceptance with God to eternal Life; neither I nor *Barnabas* (*v.* 2.) would by any Means yield to them, by consenting to such a Subjection to the Law: (υδη ειξαμεν τη υποταγη) No, in a Case of such vast Importance, we would not comply with them in the least, for so much as one Hour, or in any one Instance whatsoever, that the true Doctrine and Design of the Gospel of the Grace of God, relating to Justification in his Sight, might continue uncorrupted among you, and all the rest of the believing *Gentiles*.

6 But of those who seemed to be somewhat;

6. But as to those of my Fellow Apostles, *James*, *Peter* and *John*, (ver. 9.) who are indeed eminent Servants of

‖ *False Brethren unawares brought in*, is thought by some to be meant of their being brought into the private Assembly at *Jerusalem* (ver. 2) But as here is a manifest Reference to what is recorded *Acts* xv. 1, &c. I rather conceive that the Church at *Antioch* is intended.

(whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no Man's Person) *for they who seemed* to be somewhat, *in Conference added nothing to me.*

Jesus Christ, and are highly magnified by your *Judaizing* Teachers, as every Way to be preferred to me, Whatsoever they have been formerly, (ποτὲ) it don't at all affect my Character, nor does it make me a Whit better or worse, than I should have been, whether they were so great and valuable in themselves, or in your Account, or not: That God, who called me as well as them, to the Apostleship, has no Regard to any Man's Person whatsoever, on Account of Names and Parties, or of external Privileges and Appearances; but reveals his Gospel, and gives his Commission for preaching it, to whom, and in what Way he pleases, as he has in an immediate Manner to me, without any Assistance from them; for, be they never so great, I must say that none of them, in the Conversation I had with them, contributed any thing to the Improvement of my Knowledge, beyond what I had learn'd from Christ before; nor did any of them pretend to find fault with, or go about to correct and mend, what I had preached and done among the *Gentiles*.

7 *But contrariwise, when they saw that the Gospel of the Uncircumcision was committed unto me, as* the Gospel *of the Circumcision was unto Peter*;

7. But, on the contrary, when they heard the Account, which I and my Brother *Barnabas* gave them, of what the Lord had wrought by us among the *Gentiles* (Acts xv. 5, 12.) they plainly perceived that I was intrusted by a divine Commission with the Ministry of the Gospel of Salvation to the uncircumcised Heathens, as *Peter* was of the same Gospel, for the Substance of it, to the circumcised *Jews*. (See the Note on *Rom.* ii. 26.)

8 *(For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the Apostleship of the Circumcision, the same was mighty in me towards the Gentiles)*

8. For it appeared by undeniable Facts, that the same Lord, who work'd effectually in and by *Peter*, and had produced Wonders of Miracles and of Grace, as the Seals of his apostolic Mission to the circumcised *Jews*; had likewise work'd with equal Power and Efficacy in and by me, unto as full and clear a Demonstration of my apostolic Mission to the uncircumcised *Gentiles*.

9 *And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be Pillars, perceived the Grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the Right Hands of Fellowship; that we* should go *unto the Heathen, and they unto the Circumcision.*

9. And when those famous Apostles, *James*, *Peter* and *John*, knew how remarkably God had honoured me with his free Favour, in qualifying me for, calling me to, and owning me in my Ministry to the *Gentiles*; they, who are indeed eminent Servants of Christ, and who in the Account of mine Enemies themselves were esteemed as the principal Supporters, Maintainers and Defenders of the Gospel; they, I say, took me and my Fellow-Labourer *Barnabas* by the Right Hand, as a Symbol of receiving us into their brotherly Affection and Communion, and readily owning us as the Apostles of Christ; and they agreed that, according to what he had discover'd of his Mind and Will relating to us, we should go on, in his Name and Strength, preaching to the *Gentiles*, and taking them for our principal Province, as we had begun to do before; and that they themselves would persist in preaching to the *Jews*, and taking them for their chief Province to carry on the Work

of

of Christ among them; and so we cordially wish'd each other Success in the Name of the Lord.

10 *Only* they would *that we should remember the Poor; the same which I also was forward to do.*

10. Only the three Apostles united in their earnest Request, that we would be mindful of the necessitous Christians in those perilous Days among the *Jews*, to procure charitable Contributions for their Relief from among the *Gentile*-converts, that might be both able and willing to assist them; which was so laudable, compassionate, and needful a Work, that whether they had mentioned it or not, I was of my own Accord desirous to engage in it, not only from my natural Affection to my own Countrymen, and from the hearty and impartial Love I bear to all Christ's Poor, without Distinction of Parties, for his Sake; but likewise from a Consideration that the *Gentile*-christians were Debtors to the *Jews*, as they received the Gospel from them; and so, being made Partakers of their spiritual Things, ought to minister to them in carnal Things. (1 *Cor.* xv. 26, 27.) By all this it plainly appears, that there was an entire Agreement between the other Apostles and me at *Jerusalem*; and that they thoroughly approv'd of my Doctrine and Commission, as of the same divine Authority with their own.

11 *But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the Face, because he was to be blamed.*

11. But when afterwards * *Peter* came to *Antioch*, where was the first memorable Church of the *Gentile*-christians, (*Acts* xi. 26.) yea, the very Church that sent me and *Barnabas* to *Jerusalem*, on the Question about the *Gentiles* being obliged to be circumcised, and received an Answer in the Negative. (*Act.* xv. 1—32.) I knowing myself to be no Way inferior in Office to him, and finding an Inconsistency in his Conduct here with his avow'd Principles at *Jerusalem*, did not go about to reproach him behind his Back; but, in Faithfulness to my Trust, took the Liberty to oppose and reprove him personally to his Face; because, notwithstanding all his Greatness and Goodness, he, being left to his own Spirit, behaved at such a Rate as deserved to be openly discountenanced and condemned †.

12 *For before that*

12. For at his first coming to *Antioch*, before the Arrival

* Some have thought that this was before the Council at *Jerusalem*; (Acts xv.) but I rather incline to those that take it to have been after; for the Order of the Narrative speaks for this; and *Paul* and *Barnabas* certainly went to *Antioch* with the Decree of the Council, and continued there preaching the Word for some Time afterwards. (Acts xv. 22, 35.) But it don't appear that *Paul* had seen *Peter* more than once before his third Journey to *Jerusalem*, which he mentions ver. 1. of this Chapter. (See the Note there.)

† As what the Apostle writes, in this and the three following Verses, is admirably suited to his Purpose, for supporting his Authority, as equal to that of *Peter* himself; so it gives us a flagrant Proof against the Popish Pleas for the Supremacy of *Peter* and his pretended Successors; and shews that the Apostles themselves were neither infallible, nor impeccable, any further than they were under the immediate Conduct and Influence of the Holy Ghost: But this no way affects the Rule of Faith, which we have in the written Word of God, and which faithfully condemns such Things in the Apostles themselves, as proceeded from their own Spirit, and not from the Spirit of God, that we might not be misled by them, and might be assured that, where no such Intimation is given, and nothing of that Kind appears from the Nature of Things, we may safely depend on the divine Authority of what they said and did. (See the Note on 1 *Cor.* vii. 10.)

of

certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: But when they were come, he withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them which were of the Circumcision.

of some zealous *Judaizing* Christians, that came from the Apostle *James*, he knowing his Christian-Liberty, freely convers'd, and sat down to Meals in a friendly Manner, with the believing *Gentiles*, without any Scruple on Account of their not being circumcised, or of their different Meats and Ways of dressing them, than were allowed by the *Mosaic* Law: But as soon as those Brethren arrived, he temporized so far, as to carry it shy toward the *Gentile* Converts, and decline all further Converses in a social and familiar Manner with them, through his Fear of offending those Zealots, and raising their Prejudices, Rage and Outcries against him.

13 *And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their Dissimulation.*

13. And the rest of the *Jewish* Christians at *Antioch*, that had pretty well got over their old Prejudices against the believing *Gentiles* on Account of their not being circumcised, were so unhappily misled by *Peter*'s Behaviour, as to follow his Steps under feigned Pretences of its being unlawful; or at least inexpedient to associate freely with them. And as a bad Example in the greatest and best of Men is, of all others, the most ensnaring and defiling to those that have a good Opinion of them; so even *Barnabas* himself, though he was an excellent Christian and Apostle of the *Gentiles*, was carried away with the Stream, and under the Power of Temptation and remaining Corruption, was likewise drawn by specious Pretences, contrary to his own Judgment, to fall in with this pernicious Scheme.

14 *But when I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the Truth of the Gospel, I said unto Peter before* them *all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the Manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?*

14. But when, in Reflection on their Conduct, I perceived that, in this Particular, they did not act up to the Simplicity and Godly Sincerity of the Christian-character, nor regularly trace, with a right Foot, (ουκ ορθοποδουσι) or behave correspondent to the true Spirit and Design of the Gospel-Doctrine of Justification alone by Christ; my Soul was filled with holy Indignation; and applying myself personally to *Peter*, as the Ringleader in this dangerous Sort of double Dealing, I said to him publickly, in the Presence of *Barnabas*, and all the *Judaizers*, by way of Caution and Rebuke to them as well as him, and of Confirmation to the believing *Gentiles*, since you, who are yourself originally a *Jew*, think proper and make no Scruple, on some Occasions, to converse with, and conform to the Customs of the *Gentiles*, without Respect to any Distinction of Nations or Meats, or Regard to the Prohibitions of the Law of *Moses* about them; and since you don't always confine yourself to the ceremonial Customs of the *Jews*, How unreasonable, injurious and self-condemning is it in you, by this your refusing for fear of the *Jews* to converse or eat with the *Gentiles*, to entice and influence them, that never were under the Law, to go into an Observation of it after the Manner of the *Jews*, as if they could not otherwise be accepted of God? How absurd and contrary to the Truth of the Gospel is this!

15 *We* who are *Jews by Nature, and*

15. For we, *Peter*, *Barnabas*, *Paul* and other Believers, who are *Jews* by Birth, and as such were counted an holy

not Sinners of the Gentiles.

People, and train'd up under the Instructions and Obligations of the *Mosaic* Law, and were not Sinners of the *Gentile* Race, who were always utter Strangers to that Law, and look'd upon as the most profligate and abandon'd Wretches;

16 *Knowing that a Man is not justified by the Works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ; even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the Faith of Christ, and not by the Works of the Law: For by the Works of the Law shall no Flesh be justified.*

16. We, I say, when God came to work effectually upon us by his Spirit, were fully convinced, that no Man can be acquitted from Condemnation, and accepted of God as Righteous, by his Performances of the Works of the Law, in any View or Consideration of them whatsoever, but that this Benefit is to be obtained merely through Faith in Christ, on account of that perfect Righteousness, which he has wrought out in Conformity and Satisfaction to the holy and broken Law; even we, (who stood upon better Terms for Life than the *Gentiles*) being made thoroughly sensible of this, have been induced to believe in Christ, as the only Saviour, for this very End and Purpose, that we might be justified unto eternal Life, entirely and alone thro' Faith, as apprehending and receiving him, and not at all, neither in Whole nor in Part, by our own Performances of the Deeds of the Law. And there was an absolute Necessity for our taking this Course, as ever we would not miscarry in an Affair of such vast Importance; (much more must it be so for the *Gentiles*, who have still less Pretences, than we had, to depend upon their own Works) For considering the strict Demands of the Law, and the great and many Defects that are found in the best of us, it is impossible that *any Man living*, be he *Jew* or *Gentile*, should be *justified* by his Obedience to its moral, and much less to its ceremonial Precepts, or by any personal Righteousness of his own *, as the Scripture itself assures us, (*Ps.* cxliii. 2.)

17 *But if while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found Sinners, is therefore Christ the Minister of Sin? God forbid.*

17. But if, whilst in this Manner we, in a Way of believing, seek for Justification alone by what Christ has done and suffered in our Room and Stead, which is the proper Meaning of what I call being justified by the Faith of Christ; (*v.* 16.) If at the same Time we ourselves are found to be under Guilt and Condemnation, as unpardoned and accursed Sinners, which is the Case with all those that are under the Law; (*Chap.* iii. 10. and *Rom.* iii. 19.) Shall we therefore say that, after all that Christ has revealed about the Way of Salvation, and has wrought in us by his Spirit to make us renounce all Expectations of being justified by the Law, he is the Author of a Dispensation, which, instead of bringing in Righteousness to eternal Life, leaves us under the Guilt of Sin, and consequently under its Power,

* The Apostle's citing this Passage of Scripture, in Proof that they could not be justified by the Works of the Law, shews that he included the Works of the moral, as well as of the ceremonial Law; for *David* undoubtedly did so when he said (*Ps.* cxliii. 2. the Place here referr'd to) *In thy Sight shall no Man living be justified*; and our Apostle alledging it in the same Argument, *Rom.* iii. 19, 20. explains it as relating to the Law in such a Manner, as can agree to none but the moral Law; for he there speaks of it as the Law, by which *the whole World is become guilty before God,* and *by which is the Knowledge of Sin.* (See the Note there.)

to

to be dealt with as Transgressors †? Detestable Thought! Far be it from ever entering into my Mind.

18 For if I build again the Things which I destroyed, I make myself a Transgressor.

18. For if I again go about to set up the Righteousness of the Law for Justification before God, after I had renounced all Regard to it for that Purpose, which is like a foolish Builder's erecting the same Sort of House, that he had pull'd down as insufficient to answer his End, I should grievously offend against God and my own Conscience, by falling from the Doctrine of Grace, (Ch. v. 4.) and defeating my own Design in believing on Christ alone for Justification; and should reduce myself again to a State of Guilt and Condemnation, which, according to the Tenor of the Law, must be the Case of every one that has transgressed it. (Ch. iii. 10.) But this I can never be persuaded to do.

19 For I through the Law am dead to the Law, that I might live unto God.

19. For by the deep Sense I have of the Spirituality, Extent and Strictness of the Law in its Demands for Justification, and of God's Design to convince of Sin, and not to justify the Sinner by it, I am quite taken off from, and dead to all my former Expectations of Righteousness to eternal Life by it; (*Rom.* vii. 9, 10.) and now see that I am discharged from the *Mosaic* Law, as a Covenant of Works, that I might live in a State of Favour and Acceptance with God, through the Righteousness of Christ, in whom I have believed for this very Purpose *; and that being divorced from the Law as my first Husband, and married to Christ, I might live upon better Principles, to better Ends, and under new Obligations, in all Holiness to God, according to the unchangeable Rule of Obedience, which he has laid down in the Law. (*Rom.* vii. 1—6.)

20 I am crucified with Christ: Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: And the Life which I now live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God, who loved me,

20. I, in this Manner, am crucified to the Law, or, which is much the same Thing, the Law is crucified to me, as to all Expectations of Life, or Possibility of attaining it by any personal Obedience to its Precepts; I have entirely done with it for any such Purpose, through, and together with, and by Virtue derived from Christ, who was crucified to bear its Curse, and cancel its Obligation as a Covenant: Nevertheless, whilst I am in this Sense dead to the Law, I am brought into a State of Justification to Life, and am enabled

† There is the greatest Difficulty in fixing the determinate Sense of this Verse; but the Interpretation given in the Paraphrase seems to fall in directly with the whole Tenor of the Apostle's Argument; and the only Objection, as I conceive, against it is, that a *Minister of Sin*, according to the genuine Sense of that Expression, signifies one that *countenances* or some way contributes to it: But this Idea will be included, if we consider that *unpardon'd* Sin is always *reigning* Sin, and its Guilt being charg'd upon us, subjects us to its Power and Dominion; and so if we are really unjustified, while we seek and profess to be justified by Christ, we, in Effect, are still under the Power of Sin; and if Christ's Doctrine of Justification alone by him leaves us in that State, he thereby, instead of delivering us from Sin, the more effectually binds it upon us.

* I think Interpreters, by having generally dropp'd the Notion of living to God, in a State of Pardon and Acceptance with him, in this and the following Verse, lose Sight of the Apostle's main Argument, as if it had no Concern here, and make the Connection of the 21st Verse with these very abrupt; and therefore I have brought into View the Life of *Justification*, as well as of Sanctification and Holiness, in this Part of the Apostle's Reasoning.

and gave himself for me.

on that Foundation to bring forth living Fruits of Righteousness to God; yet this Life, in either of these Considerations of it, is not owing to any thing in myself, but only to Christ, who lives as a Head of Righteousness, and a Head of Influence in me, by virtue of my Union with him; so that it is not so much I that live, as Christ that lives in me; and the Life of Pardon and Acceptance with God and for his Glory, to which I am now restored, and according to which I continue to live and act, whilst I am here in the Body, is not by the Works of the Law, nor according to the Dictates of the Flesh, but only by that Faith, which renounces every thing of Self, and carries me out to the eternal Son of God, as relying intirely upon him, and deriving all vital Influence from him, who, in the Greatness of his endearing, matchless and distinguishing Grace, without any Desert in myself, loved me, and freely gave himself up to the worst of Deaths to make a compleat Atonement for my Sin *, and to redeem me from its Power, and from the Wrath to come, and entitle me to eternal Life.

21 *I do not frustrate the Grace of God: for if Righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain.*

21. In all this I stick close to my evangelical Principles, I do not, I dare not, I wonld not be so ungrateful, as to despise, reject, or make void (ουκ αθετω) the Gospel of Grace, the Love of Christ, and the free Favour of God in giving him for us, and accepting us as righteous through Fairh in him, as they do who plead for Justification by the Works of the Law †: For if Righteousness to eternal Life were to be wrought out by our Obedience to the Law, under any Consideration of it whatsoever, there would then have been no Need of his dying to discharge us from Condemnation, and entitle us to Life; and so the Grace of God, which appears in his Death, answers no Purposes of this Kind, that might not have been answered without it; nay, if the Law bears any Part in our Justification, his Death was insufficient of itself for it, and *Grace is no more Grace*, (Rom. xi. 6.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

With what remarkable Prudence did the great Apostle, gradually and seasonably, communicate the Gospel of Christ in all its Extent, Light and Glory; first to Persons of chief Esteem, Rank and Influence in the Church, that, being countenanced by them, it might have the easier Access to the prejudic'd Minds of others, and that he might not lose the great End of his Ministry, in which he labour'd for the Salvation of immortal Souls! With what Faithfulness did

* The Apostle's saying so emphatically, and with Appropriation, Christ *loved me and gave himself for me,* intimates that he look'd upon this as a peculiar Favour to him, in Distinction from the Bulk of Mankind, and particularly from those that were Strangers to his living in them.

† The Reason which the Apostle here gives against Justification by the Works of the Law, is of equal Force in every Consideration of them; and therefore is not to be restrain'd to the Works of the ceremonial Law.

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he, together with all his Prudence, stick to his evangelical Principles, and execute his Commission, in not suffering *Titus* to be circumcised, when an ill Use was likely to be made of it to the subverting of the Gospel! And with what Evidence did he support the divine Authority of his Office, as equal to that of *Peter*, or of any other Apostles! Accordingly *James*, *Peter* and *John*, neither of which claim'd a Superiority over the other, upon hearing with what glorious Efficacy Christ had exerted his Power in and by him, could not but embrace him with the Affection of Brethren; and while they could add nothing to the Revelation, or the Commission, which he had received, they cheerfully agreed, that he and *Barnabas* should go on with their Work principally among the *Gentiles*, wishing them Prosperity in the Name of the Lord; and that they themselves would mostly continue to preach the same Gospel to the *Jews*. And *Paul*, to shew his Affection to *Jewish* Converts, without Distinction of Parties, was as willing to do what in him lay for the Relief of their Poor, as their own Apostles could wish him to be. But, alas! how far may the best of God's Servants and People be suffer'd, under the Power of Temptation, to act unbecoming the Sincerity of their Christian-Character, and injuriously to the true Gospel of Christ! Witness *Peter*, *Barnabas*, and many other believing *Jews*. And how dangerous are great Examples, when they take a wrong Turn! Whatsoever therefore any Man's Authority, Reputation or Pretences be, an unworthy Behaviour is to be detested and oppos'd in them, as well as in Persons of lower Character; and they who publickly offend, should be as publickly rebuk'd, that others may hear and fear. And with what Earnestness, Zeal and holy Boldness should Gospel-ministers, and Christians too, contend for the pure Doctrine of Justification alone by Christ, through Faith in him, in Opposition to Justification by any Works of the Law! Their own Experience, under the saving Convictions and Operations of the Spirit, leads them to believe in Christ alone for this Purpose, as knowing that they were before in a State of Condemnation, and that by the Deeds of the Law no Man can be justified. They, by their Insight into the true Nature and Design of the Law itself, are dead to all Expectations of being justified by it, that they may look for this Benefit alone from Christ, through his atoning Blood and Sacrifice; and may live by Faith on him for it, and for quickning and sanctifying Influence to enable them to live in all holy Obedience to God, according to the everlasting Rule of Righteousness, as contain'd in the moral Law. This is indeed not so much their own living, as Christ's living in them: And to take any other Course for seeking Acceptance with God, and effectual Influence for living to him, is to go about to build what they themselves had before destroy'd, and to subject them to a State of Guilt and Condemnation, as Sinners whom the Law can never justify; and it is to render the free Grace of God and the meritorious Death of Christ useless, and of none Effect: But O how delightful is it, when the Believer can make a personal Claim to Christ, and say on good Grounds, he loved me, and gave himself for me!

CHAP. III.

The Apostle reproves, and warmly expostulates with the Galatians *for their Folly in departing from the great Doctrine of Justification alone through Faith in Christ,* 1—5; *establishes this Doctrine from the Example of* Abraham's *Justification,* 6—9, *from the Tenor of the Law and the Severity of its Curse, from which Believers are redeemed by Christ, that they might be blessed with* Abraham, 10—14, *from the Stability of the Covenant of Promises made with him, which the Law could not disanul, and from the Inconsistency of Justification by the free Promise and by the Law,* 15—18. *He nevertheless shews that the Law had its Use, as it was given to Sinners among the* Jews *to convince them of their Need of a Saviour, and was a School-master to lead them to Christ,* 19—25. *And that under the Gospel-state true Be-*

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lievers are, without Distinction of Nations or of external Circumstances, all one in Christ, and Heirs of Abraham's *Blessings,* 26—29.

TEXT.

1 *O Foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the Truth, before whose Eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?*

PARAPHRASE.

1. O O ye thoughtless, inconsiderate, stupid *Galatians!* (ἀνόητοι) I would not reproach you; but my Heart is moved with tender Compassion toward you, and with holy Zeal for the Purity of the Gospel, which is corrupted among you: By what artful Insinuations and Stratagems has Satan, or any false Teacher, as his Instrument, so far infatuated you, as to prevent your continuing to adhere, and yield yourselves up to the true Gospel-doctrine of Justification alone by Jesus Christ, through Faith in him, (*Chap.* ii. 16.) who in his Sufferings and Death has been in as lively and affecting a Manner represented, and as it were painted out among you, in the preaching of the Gospel, and in the Administration of the Lord's Supper, as if ye had actually seen him hanging upon the Cross with your bodily Eyes; and the Design of whose Crucifixion, to deliver you from the Law, as a Covenant of Works has been clearly opened to you?

2 *This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the Works of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith?*

2. Let me only ask you this fair and plain Question, to convince you of your prodigious Folly and Madness herein; Were ye made Partakers of the Holy Spirit, (which so many of you were endued with in his miraculous Gifts, and I would charitably hope in his Graces too) by the Ministration of the Law, or on Account, or by Means of any Works performed by you in Obedience to that Ministration of Death and Condemnation; (2 *Cor.* iii. 7, 9.) or, on the contrary, was it not by Means of your hearing and embracing the Doctrine of Faith in Christ alone for Justification, even that Word of Faith which we preach, and is the Ministration of the Spirit and of Righteousness? (*Rom.* x. 8. and 2 *Cor.* iii. 8, 9.) Which of these is it that God has owned with such remarkable Tokens of his Favour and Acceptance? The Fact evidently proves, and ye must surely acknowledge, that it was not by the first, but by the last of these Dispensations; especially considering that many of you never so much as heard of the Law of *Moses*, till after ye were converted from your *Gentilism.*

3 *Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the Flesh?*

3. Having then set out so happily and hopefully in your Christian-course, under the Light and Influence of the Spirit, with Faith in Christ for all Acceptance to eternal Life, according to the Tenor of the Gospel; How surprizingly stupid and irrational is it, for any of you to imagine, that your Justification is to be compleated by your own Obedience to the Law, which may be termed *Flesh* in Opposition to the Gospel, as it is destitute of the Spirit, (2 *Cor.* iii. 6—8.) and a Man is bound to obey the Whole of it by

the fleſhly Ordinance of Circumciſion; (*Gal.* v. 3.) as its ceremonial Rites ſanctify only to the purifying of the Fleſh; (*Heb.* ix. 13.) and as ſeeking Juſtification by any Works of the Law is pleaſing to the Fleſh, is taught by the Wiſdom of the Fleſh, and gratifies the Pride of corrupt Nature, in giving it Occaſion of aſſuming Glory to itſelf? (*Rom.* iv. 2.) But all this is ſo far from perfecting, that it is directly ſubverſive of the Goſpel-doctrine, in this grand Article of it,

4 *Have ye ſuffered ſo many Things in vain? if* it be *yet in vain.*

4. And as ye have ſuffered a great deal of Perſecution, by the Inſtigation of your Adverſaries the *Jews*, for your Profeſſion of this very Doctrine; How prepoſterouſly weak and foolish has your ſubmitting to ſo many Hardſhips on that Account been, without any Manner of ſpiritual Benefit to yourſelves? If after all (which God forbid) ye ſhould apoſtatize; and ſo both your Profeſſion and Sufferings ſhould prove to be unprofitable and vain.

5 *He therefore that miniſtereth to you the Spirit, and worketh Miracles among you,* doeth he it *by the Works of the Law, or by the Hearing of Faith?*

5. To return therefore to my Argument, (*v.* 2.) Whether ye conſider Chriſt as the Author *, or me as only the Inſtrument, of communicating to ſome of you, at leaſt, ſuch Gifts and Graces of the Holy Spirit, as are Tokens of God's accepting you; and of ſuch wonderful Miracles as are a divine Atteſtation to the Truth of the Goſpel; Are theſe powerful and gracious Effects produced under the Influence of Chriſt's Spirit, by Means of my preaching, or of your doing, the Works of the Law, in Order to your Juſtification? It is evident that there can be no Pretence of this Kind. Or were theſe Favours conferred upon you, by Means of your hearing and embracing the Doctrine of Faith in Chriſt, as alone ſufficient to anſwer that End? They certainly were: And this is a Teſtimony from God, that your Juſtification is no Way owing to the Law, but only to Chriſt, thro' Faith in him.

6 *Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for Righteouſneſs.*

6. Even as it was in the Caſe of *Abraham*, (*Gen.* xv. 1, 5, 6.) that eminent Father of the Faithful, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, (*v.* 28, 29.) who gave Credit to, and reſted upon the Promiſe, which God made to him of the *Meſſiah*; (*v.* 8. 16.) and what he apprehended, and believed in the promiſed Saviour for, was imputed to him for Righteouſneſs unto Juſtification. (See the Note on *Rom.* iv. 3.)

7 *Know ye therefore, that they which are of Faith, the ſame are the Children of Abraham.*

7. Be ye therefore aſſured, that they who are true Believers in Chriſt, according to the Promiſes, as that great Patriarch was, are in a ſpiritual Senſe the true Children of *Abraham*, whom God owns and accepts as ſuch, that they may be bleſſed together with him.

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* He that *miniſters* or *ſupplies* (ὁ ἐπιχορηγῶν) may relate either to *Chriſt*, who was mentioned, (*v.* 1.) or to the *Apoſtle* himſelf, though he in Modeſty concealed his own Name: and both are introduced into the Paraphraſe in a Manner ſuitable to the different Concernment that Chriſt and the Apoſtle had in the Things here mentioned.

8 *And the Scripture foreſeeing that God would juſtify the Heathen thro' Faith, preached before the Goſpel unto Abraham,* ſaying, *In thee ſhall all Nations be bleſſed.*

8. And as there is but one Way of any Sinner's being juſtified; ſo the Holy Ghoſt, by whoſe Inſpiration the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament were written, fore-knowing that God deſigned in due Time to juſtify the idolatrous *Gentiles*, as well as others, only through Faith in Chriſt, intimated it long before-hand, even before the Inſtitution of Circumciſion, and the giving of the Law, by the Glad-tidings of Salvation which he publiſhed in his Promiſe to *Abraham*, ſaying, (*Gen.* xii. 3.) *in thee*, meaning *in thy Seed*, as it is afterwards explained, (*Chap*. xxii. 18.) *i. e.* thro' the Obedience and Sufferings of the *Meſſiah*, who will deſcend from thy Loins, ſhall Perſons of all Nations, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, be graciouſly accepted of God, and bleſſed with all ſpiritual and eternal Bleſſings.

9 *So then they which be of Faith, are bleſſed with faithful Abraham.*

9. From hence therefore it plainly follows, that they, who are Partakers of a true and lively Faith in Chriſt, and ſeek to be juſtified merely on his Account, whatſoever their Character and Condition had been before, are bleſſed together with, and as effectually as, believing *Abraham* himſelf, that famous Friend of God; which they cou'd never be by virtue of their own perſonal Obedience to the Law.

10 *For as many as are of the Works of the Law, are under the Curſe. For it is written, Curſed* is *every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them.*

10. For all Mankind being Sinners, as many of them as are under the Law-covenant, and are ſuch Abettors of its Works, as to look for Pardon, Juſtification, and Salvation by, and for what they can do in Conformity to it, are ſo far from being bleſſed, that they are under a Sentence of Condemnation to Miſery and Death: For ſo ſtrict and ſevere is the Law-tenure in its moral Demands, that it abſolutely condemns for every Failure, inſomuch that it is written, with Regard to all that are under it, (*Deut*. xxvii. 26.) The Curſe of God, which is the Declaration of his Wrath in the Law, ſtands in Force againſt every one, and binds him over to deſerved Puniſhment, who does not perſonally, univerſally, and perfectly continue at all Times, in Thought, Word and Deed, through the whole Courſe of his Life, to obſerve and perform every Precept, that is recorded in the Book of the Law, without the leaſt Flaw or Defect by any Sin of Omiſſion or Commiſſion whatſoever.

11 *But that no Man is juſtified by the Law in the Sight of God,* it is *evident: For, The Juſt ſhall live by Faith.*

11. But it is ſtill further evident, that no Man is or can be juſtified on Account of his own Obedience to the Law, at the Bar of the juſt and holy God, whoſe penetrating Eye obſerves every ſinful Motion of the Heart, as well as Action of the Life: For he has appointed another Way for the Juſtification of ſinful Men, as appears from an expreſs Declaration of his Will in his Word, where he ſaies, (*Hab.* ii. 4.) The Man, who is accounted righteous before God, ſhall be delivered from Law-condemnation, and brought into a State of Life and Salvation; and ſhall continue to live in that State of Favour and Acceptance, through Jeſus Chriſt and his Righteouſneſs, by Means of his Faith

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in him, till it be crowned with eternal Life, (*Rom.* i. 17. See the Note and Paraphrase there.)

12 *And the Law is not of Faith: But, The Man that doeth them shall live in them.*

12. And it is ceatain, that the Way prescribed for Justification in the Law is not by Faith; but the Terms which it has fixed for that Purpose are, that the Man who perfectly answers all its Demands, by doing every Thing which it enjoins, he, and none but he, shall be acquitted from Condemnation, and entitled to Life by it; so that unless his Obedience to the Law be perpetual, sinless, and without Defect, which is impossible to any Man in his present fallen State, he is so far from being able to obtain a Title to Life by the Tenor of the Law, that he can't free himself from its Curse.

13 *Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a Tree.*

13. But Christ, in the Greatness of his Love, and by the Merit of his Death, (ἐξηγόρασεν) has bought us, who believe in him, out of the Hands of Justice; and so by the Price of his own precious Blood, has delivered us from all that Wrath and Punishment, which is summed up and threatned in the Curse of the Law, as the due Desert of Sin; he having, by God the Father's Appointment, come under the Sentence and Execution of the Law, in our Room and Stead, when he hung, like the vilest of Criminals, on the Cross, as is intimated by the very Nature of that Kind of Death, and his being *deliver'd by the determinate Counsel and Fore-knowledge of God*, to suffer it: (*Acts* ii. 23.) For this Sort of Death was not only the most infamous of all others among the *Romans*, but is stigmatized in the *Mosaic* Law itself, where it is written (*Deut.* xxi. 23.) with a typical View to the Crucifixion of Christ, Every one that is hanged on a Tree, is to be deemed as forsaken of God and devoted to Death, according to the utmost Rigour of the Law against the most execrable Offenders, that are condemned, as guilty in its Eye.

14 *That the Blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the Promise of the Spirit thro' Faith.*

14. Our blessed Lord, with amazing Condescension and Compassion to us, submitted in this Manner to bear and take away the Curse of the Law from us, that instead of its being executed upon us, according to our Deserts, the Blessing of Righteousness to Justification and Life, (ver. 11, 21.) which was conferred on *Abraham*, and was promised to him for his Covenant-Seed, that should claim under Christ, in whom all Nations were to be blessed, might be freely vouchsafed, even to believing Sinners of the *Gentiles*, through the only Saviour, who should descend from his Loin; and particularly that we, who live under the Gospel-dispensation, whether we be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, might receive the promised Spirit in a plentiful Communication of his Gifts, Graces and Comforts, as the Pledge and Token of our Title to the eternal Inheritance, and as a Testification of it to our Consciences, not for, or on account of, any

Works

Works of our own, but merely through Faith in him, who purchased this Blessing for us.

15 Brethren, I speak after the Manner of Men; Tho' it be but a Man's Covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no Man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.

15. To illustrate this Point, my Brethren, by a plain and familiar Example taken from the common Practice of all Nations in their Civil Affairs, and by Language that Men are well acquainted with: We know from the Nature of a Covenant of Promises, like that to *Abraham*, that if it be but an Engagement made by such mutable and short-sighted Creatures as Men, who may afterwards change their Minds, and find some unforeseen Inconveniences attending it; yet if it be once duly ratified, by its being sign'd and seal'd, it is not lawful for any one, without the Consent of the Covenanter, to alter it, either by cancelling and making it void, on one Hand; or by adding new Articles to it, as the Self-justiciaries and Legalists of this Day would do by the Covenant of Grace, on the other.

16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the Promises made. He saith not, And to Seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ.

16. Now, to apply this to the Case before us, the Covenant that I have given a Hint of, (ver. 8, 9, 14.) relating to the Way of our being accepted of God as righteous, consisted of a free Promise, which because of its vast Comprehension of Blessings, and of its being first made to *Abraham*, and afterwards repeated to him, and to *Isaac* (Gen. xii. 3. and xxii. 18. and xxvi. 4.) may be called the *Promises*, and which the all-wise and unchangeable God himself, who cannot lie, made, not to the Father of the Faithful only, but to him and his Seed: And to shew that this was meant of one particular Sort of Seed, God did not say that he gave this Covenant of Promises to *Abraham*, and to his *Seeds* in the plural Number, as if he meant all his *natural*, as well as *spiritual* Children, or such of his fleshly Posterity as should seek to be justified upon any other Foot, than that of the Covenant made with him, as well as with those that walk in the Steps of his Faith: (*Rom.* iv. 12.) But God, in a Way of Promise to his Seed, spoke in the singular Number, which was primarily meant of *Christ* himself, as to descend from him, not through the Loins of *Ishmael*, but of *Isaac*, who was the Child of the Promise; and so represented the true Children of *Abraham*, that should be accounted his spiritual Seed, and should be reckoned to Christ, and Claim under him, as Members of his mystical Body, thro' Faith in him. (*Rom.* ix. 7, 8.)*

17 And this I say, that the Covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the

17. Thus therefore I argue; This Covenant of Promises, which was made with a View to Christ, (εἰς Χριστὸν) and was to receive its final Confirmation by his Blood, having been before-hand ratified by God in him, and with Relation to him,

* *Thy Seed, which is Christ*, is understood by some to mean our Lord himself *personally*, as descended from *Abraham*; and by others Christ *mystically*, as comprehending all his spiritual Seed, or those that believe in him, who whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, are in a Covenant Sense *Abraham's Seed, and Heirs according to the Promise*. (ver. 29.) And as I think both may be included, the Paraphrase introduces both; tho' it seems, as if the primary Reference were to Christ *personally* consider'd.

Law which was four hundred and thirty Years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the Promise of none Effect.

him, who is the Head, Mediator, Surety and Substance of it, and who, according to the Assurance then given to *Abraham*, should spring from his Loins, as that Messiah, in whom his spiritual Seed of all Nations should be blessed; This Covenant, I say, being confirmed by God's own Word of Promise, (*Gen.* xii. 3.) by the Seal of Circumcision, and his Accomplishment of one leading Part of the Promise in the Birth of *Isaac*, (Ch. xvii. 4, 10, 15, 19. and xxi. 2.) and by his Oath, (Ch. xxii. 16—18.) the Law of *Moses*, which was not given till * four hundred and thirty Years (*Ex.* xii. 40) after this great Promise was made, could not in any Consistency with the Wisdom and Faithfulness of God, invalidate it, and destroy its Effect; so as to supersede it, and introduce another Way of Justification and Salvation, than that, which this Promise related to: This plainly shews that a Right and Title to eternal Life cannot be obtained by the Works of the Law, but only thro' Faith in Christ.

18 *For if the Inheritance* be *of the Law*, it is *no more of Promise: But God gave* it *to Abraham by Promise.*

18. For if a Title to the heavenly Inheritance, typified by that of the Land of *Canaan*, is obtained by Virtue of any Works done in Obedience to the Law, it is no longer the Matter of a free Promise; since Works and Grace, in this Consideration of them, are directly opposite. (*Rom.* xi. 6.) But it is evident, that God gave it (κεχάρισται) to *Abraham* and his Seed, not through the Law, but by a merely gratuitous, free, and absolute Promise, through the Righteousness of Faith, that it might be sure to all his spiritual Seed of what Nature soever they be. (*Rom.* iv. 13, 16.)

19 *Wherefore then* serveth *the Law? It was added because of Transgressions, till the Seed should come, to whom the Promise was made*; and it was *ordained by Angels in the Hand of a Mediator.*

19. Some then may, perhaps, object and say, if it be so, To what End or Purpose was the *Mosaic* Law delivered to the *Israelites* at all? To this I answer, It was afterwards annexed to the Promise, not for bringing in a new Way of Justification, but in Subserviency to the great Design of the Promise itself, that as they were Sinners and obnoxious, as such, to divine Wrath, as well as the rest of Mankind, it might be a Means of discovering, as well as restraining Sin, of convincing them of their Guilt and Danger, (*Rom.* iii. 20. and iv. 15. and v. 20.) and of their Need of such a gracious Promise; and might put them upon looking to Christ and his atoning Sacrifice, (*v.* 24.) till he

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* The usual Computation of *four hundred and thirty Years* is from the Time that the Promise was first made to *Abraham* at the Age of seventy-five Years; (*Gen.* xii. 3, 4.) from thence to the Birth of *Isaac*, *Abraham* being then an hundred Years old, (*Gen.* xxi. 5.) was twenty-five Years; from thence to the Birth of *Jacob* was sixty Years; (*Gen.* xxv. 26.) from thence to *Jacob*'s going into *Egypt* was an hundred and thirty Years; (*Gen.* xlvii. 9.) and from thence to *Israel*'s Deliverance out of *Egypt* was two hundred and fifteen Years, which added to the foregoing Numbers make four hundred and thirty Years, which, according to the *seventy*, (*Exod.* xii. 40.) was the whole Time of their sojourning in *Egypt*, and before in the Land of *Canaan*. (See *Whitby* on the Place, *Bedford*'s Chronol. pag. 293. and *Universal Hist.* Vol. I. pag. 423. Fol.

at length should come into the World, who was, by Way of Eminence, that Seed of *Abraham*, to whom the Promise principally referred, and in whom believing *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as the true Children of *Abraham*, should be united, and gathered into one Body under him, as their Head, *who is the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believes: (Rom.* x. 4.) And this Law was not given to *Israel*, like the Promise to *Abraham* and his Seed, immediately from God himself; but it was conveyed by the Ministry of Angels (See the Paraphrase on *Acts* vii. 53.) to *Moses*, and delivered into his Hand, as the Representative of that People, and as a typical Mediator, who stood betwen God and them, (*Lev.* xxvi. 46. and *Deut.* v. 5.) to remind them of their Need of the promised Saviour to perform this Office effectually for them.

20 *Now a Mediator is not* a Mediator *of one*; *but God is one.*

20. Now a Mediator, as the very Term signifies, is a Friend that interposes between two Parties, and is not to transact merely with and for one of them to the Exclusion of the other: But God, from whom the Law was delivered to *Israel* by the Hand of *Moses*, is only one of the Parties concerned in the Promise unto *Abraham* and his spiritual Seed of all Nations, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*; and therefore as *Gentile*-believers were included in that Promise, and neither they, nor their Representatives were present at the making of the *Sinai*-covenant, nor were concerned in that, which was made only with the natural Seed of *Abraham*; this Transaction between God and the *Jews* could not vacate the antecedent, free and absolute Promise, which extended likewise to the *Gentiles*; and indeed he is *one God, who justifies the Circumcision by Faith, and the Uncircumcision through Faith*, (*Rom.* iii. 20.) and is one and the same *, immutably faithful to his Word of Promise, and to them that trust in him according to it.

21 Is *the Law then against the Promises of God? God forbid: For if there had been a Law given, which could have given Life, verily Righteousness should have been by the Law.*

21. Is the Law then, in this Way of stating Things, really opposite in its Design, as *Jewish* Zealots would suggest to the free Promise, which was given to *Abraham* and his Seed, and is drawn out with greater Perspicuity and Glory under the Gospel-state? No, by no Means; far be it from us to imagine any such Inconsistency and Contrariety in God's own Dispensations; there is no Room for such a Thought; one being given to subserve the other, and not that we might be justified by one, as well as by the other: For had there been any Law enacted, that could have entitled a fallen Creature to Life, on Condition of his performing the Obedience it required, it is certain that God would have spared his own Son, that eminently promised Seed of *Abraham*; and Righteousness for Justification

* The various Senses I have given of *God is one*, are very consistent with the Apostle's Scope; tho', perhaps, the first of them mi[illegible] most immediately intended. (See Mr. *Lock*'s Note.)

to

to eternal Life ſhould have conſiſted in a Conformity to that Law *.

22 *But the Scripture hath concluded all under Sin, that the Promiſe by Faith of Jeſus Chriſt might be given to them that believe.*

22. But, on the contrary, the ſacred Scripture of the Old Teſtament, in its general Tenor, hath pronounced upon all Mankind, both *Jews* and *Gentiles* in their fallen State, that they are Sinners, (*Rom.* iii. 9—23. See the Note there) and hath ſhut them up together, (συνεκλεισεν) as in a Priſon, under a Sentence of Condemnation, and Incapacity of ſatisfying for their paſt Offences, or rendering themſelves acceptable to God for Time to come, by any Obedience of their own; and all this is declared, to the End that there might be no Room for any to ſeek, or expect to be juſtified, by their own Works; but that the free Promiſe of Pardon, Life and Salvation thro' Faith in Chriſt, which he is both the Object and Author of, might take Place, and be graciouſly fulfilled to every one that believes in him.

23 *But before Faith came, we were kept under the Law, ſhut up unto the Faith which ſhould afterwards be revealed.*

23. But as we are naturally Strangers and Enemies to this important Truth, and it was but obſcurely intimated under former Diſpenſations; ſo till Chriſt the Object of Faith †, and the Doctrine of Juſtification and Salvation, thro' Faith in him, came to be fully manifeſted by the Goſpel, and till we accordingly were brought to believe in him; even thoſe of us, that were educated in the *Jewiſh* Religion, were preſerved indeed under the *Moſaic* Law from joining with the idolatrous Rites of other Nations; but were held (εφρουρουμεθα) like Captives in Ward, under its commanding and condemning Sentence, and were all ſhut up together (συγκεκλεισμενοι) as Criminals incloſed in Priſon under a Senſe of Guilt, and Obnoxiouſneſs to Wrath; and yet reſerved to be trained up by Degrees under the Diſcipline of the Law unto the receiving of Chriſt, and the Doctrine of Faith in him, which was afterwards to be revealed with the cleareſt Evidence under a new Diſpenſation of Light and Grace, vaſtly exceeding all that had ever gone before it.

24 *Wherefore the Law was our Schoolmaſter* to bring us *unto Chriſt, that we might be juſtified by Faith.*

24. We are therefore to conſider the Uſe of the whole religious Law of *Moſes*, under the Notion of a School-maſter's Office in the Education of Youth, to bring us up for Chriſt, and to direct and lead us, like Children, (παιδαγωγος) during our State of Nonage, to him, as, by the Strictneſs of its *moral* Precepts, and the Severity of its Curſe, it ſhew'd us our Sin

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* A *Law*, and *by the Law*, (νομος and εκ νομου) in the latter Part of the Verſe, are without the Article; and therefore, according to Mr. *Lock*'s Rule of Interpretation, (See his Note on *Rom.* ii. 14.) they relate to Law *in general*; and the Apoſtle here oppoſes *the Promiſe by Faith of Jeſus Chriſt*, and our being *juſtified by Faith*, to our attaining Life by a Law, *i. e.* by our own perſonal Obedience to *any Law*, which ſhews that attaining Juſtification to Life *thro' Faith*, is not through Faith as an *Act of Obedience* to any ſuppos'd Law, but as it lays hold on Chriſt for eternal Life, and on the free Promiſe in and thro' him. (See the Notes on *Rom.* i. 17. and iv. 3.)

† In this and the next Verſe but one, *Faith* ſeems to be put for the *Object*, or the *Doctrine* of Faith. And yet, as we are made Partakers of ſaving Benefits only by believing, it may be proper to take the *Act* of Faith likewiſe into the Interpretation.

and Danger, the Insufficiency of our own Righteousness, and our Need of such a perfectly righteous and atoning Saviour as Christ is; and as, by its *ceremonial* Rites and typical Sacrifices, it both carried a Conviction of our own Guilt and Defilement, and pointed out his Death and Sufferings to us, that we might learn to quit all Dependence on our own Performances of the Deeds of the Law, in any View of them whatsoever for Justification, and might seek to obtain it alone thro' Faith in the meritorious Obedience and Sacrifice of the Messiah.

25 *But after that Faith is come, we are no longer under a School-master.*

25. But now, after Christ the Object of Faith, and the Doctrine of Justification by Faith in him, is made fully manifest under the Gospel-state, and we ourselves are brought to believe in him for Righteousness to eternal Life, we are got beyond that Dispensation, and are no longer, like Minors, in a State of Ignorance, Weakness and servile Fear under the severe Pedagogy of the Law, to drive us by its Terrors to Christ, and to shadow him out to us by its obscure Types, as one that should come to deliver us from Sin and Wrath.

26 *For ye are all the Children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus.*

26. For all of you, my Brethren, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, that have believed in Christ alone for Justification, according to the Tenor of the Gospel, are taken into God's Family, not merely as Children in their Nonage, but as Sons and Heirs, that are advanced from Minority to mature Age *, and are admitted to higher Privileges, than were formerly enjoy'd, even all the Blessings that belong to an evangelical Adoption, thro' Faith in the anointed Saviour, who is already come, and has actually obtain'd eternal Redemption for you. (*Heb.* ix. 12.)

27 *For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.*

27. For as many of you, as have been baptiz'd in the Name of Christ, and into the Faith and Profession of him, who has appointed that Ordinance to be the initiating visible Seal of the Covenant of Grace under the New Testament, as Circumcision was under the Old; I mean such of you, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, as are likewise, answerable to its Signification, Partakers of saving Benefits by spiritual Union with Christ, ye have put him on, not in Profession only, but in Reality by Faith, as the Lord your Righteousness, and are, as it were, all over cover'd with Christ, as a Man is with his Garments; and so there is no need of your being circumcised, in order to your Acceptance with God, who looks upon you in Christ as one with him, and as the Chil-

* Since Believers under the Old Testament were really the Children of God, as well as those under the New, the Apostle's Argument requires, that he be here understood to speak of such Children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus, as are not in a State of Minority but of *adult Age*; and so are freed from the Bondage to, or Discipline of the Law; and are admitted to the free Use of their own Inheritance, according to the Liberty of Gospel-privileges, which Old Testament Believers were Strangers to, as he explains himself at large, *Chap.* iv. 1—7.

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dren of God arrived at adult Age, through Faith in him. (*ver.* 26.)

28 *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither Bond nor Free, there is neither Male nor Female: For ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*

28. There is now no Distinction of Nations, Ranks or Sexes, with respect to Gospel-acceptance, Privileges and Blessings; no Difference between *Jew* and *Gentile*, or Master and Servant, or Male and Female; there is no Prerogative or Preference of one above another, on Account of any external Circumstances, as there was in former Dispensations: For the Grace of God is so enlarged under the Gospel-state, that all of you, who are true Believers, whatever your religious or civil Characters have been, are one holy Body in Christ, who is equally and alike the Head of every one of you, for all spiritual and saving Purposes; and therefore Circumcision, which was peculiar to Males, and design'd to keep up a Distinction between *Jews* and *Gentiles*, is of no further Use in the Church of Christ.

29 *And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and Heirs according to the Promise.*

29. And if ye be really united to Christ, as his living Members, and interested in him and devoted to him, then are ye, tho' uncircumcised in the Flesh, and of *Gentile*-Race, the true Children of *Abraham* in a Covenant-Sense; and so are Heirs according to the Promise, which was made to him and his spiritual Seed, the Chief and Head of which is Christ. (See the Paraphrase and Notes on *ver.* 16.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

What egregious, and justly reproveable Folly is it in those, that have once received the Doctrine of Justification alone by faith in Christ and his Righteousness, to depart from it, and vainly imagine that they can be justified by their own Works in Obedience to any Law whatsoever! And how inexcusably weak and self-contradictious is it, for them to do this, after Christ has been evidently set forth before them, as crucified for the Expiation of Sin, and they have suffer'd Reproaches and Persecutions for their former Profession of him! This is to begin in the Spirit, and end in the Flesh; to exclude themselves from the Benefit of God's Promises in the Gospel; to render both Christ and all their own Sufferings for his sake altogether useless to themselves; and to run directly counter to the plainest Observation and Experience, which can't but assure us, that the vital Power of Religion, and God's Attestations to it by his Spirit, do not attend the Preaching of the Law, but the Gospel-doctrine of Faith in Christ alone, for all Acceptance with God to eternal Life. This was the Way in which *Abraham* was justified, according to the Discoveries that were made of the Promised Seed in his Days; and it is only by going into this Way, that we can be his true Children to our spiritual and everlasting Advantage: For the moral Law pronounces a Curse for every Defect of Obedience; and the Scripture assures us, that we are all under Sin, and that the only Way, in which we can be justified bfore God, is by Faith in an atoning Saviour. Adored be the Riches of divine Grace, that Christ has redeemed them, that believe in him, from the Curse of the Law by being made a Curse for them! Through him the Blessing of *Abraham*, as to all external and saving Benefits, (of which the Spirit, as given to them, is a sure Pledge) comes upon them, tho' they are *Gentiles*, as effectually, as if they had been native *Jews*; for the Promise, which was made to *Abraham* and his Seed, had a primary Reference to Christ, and then to all his Members, as one with him, and included in him. And how could the Law, which was deliver'd at Mount *Sinai* by the Ministration of Angels four hundred and thirty Years after the Promise was given, and confirmed by God himself to *Abraham*, so long before; how could this disanul that Promise? It was so far from being inconsistent with the Promise, that it was subservient to its grand Design, while we consider it, as discovering and convincing of Sin,

and

and putting the awaken'd Conscience upon flying to the only Saviour, who was typified by *Moses*, as sustaining the Office of a Mediator between God and *Israel*, and while we consider it, as the Means of training them up for a willing Reception of Christ. But how valuable soever that Dispensation was in its Season, What Cause have we to bless God for the clear Revelation of his Messiah in the Gospel, and for the more excellent and extensive Blessings brought in by him! They are signified by Baptism, which is come in the Room of Circumcision, as the initiating visible Seal of the Gospel-covenant to *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*: And if we have but an Interest in Christ thro' Faith in him, whatever we were for Nation, Rank or Condition before, we are now, whether Male or Female, the Children of God, one Body in Christ, and in the best Sense *Abraham*'s Seed, and Heirs of all spiritual and heavenly Blessings, according to the utmost Meaning of the Promise made to them.

CHAP. IV.

The Apostle proceeds to shew the Folly of returning to legal Observances for Justification, from the rich Advantages, that the believing Jews *were Partakers of by the Gospel-dispensation, which brought them out of the State of Bondage under the Law, to which they, like Children under Age, had been subject before,* 1—7. *And from the exceeding happy Change that was made upon the* Gentile-*believers, by their Conversion from Idols to God,* 8—11. *He thereupon reasons with them all against falling in with false Teachers, from the great Affection they had discovered towards himself and his Ministry, and from the designing Temper of those* Judaizers, *that had crept in among them,* 12—18. *He expresses his own tender and earnest Concern for them,* 19, 20. *And then, resuming his main Argument, illustrates the Difference between what is to be expected from the Law, and from the Gospel, in a figurative Representation of the Children of Promise by* Isaac, *the Son of* Sarah, *and of the Children that were only after the Flesh by* Ishmael, *the Son of* Hagar, 21—31.

TEXT.	*PARAPHRASE.*
1 NOW *I say*, that *the Heir, as long as he is a Child, differeth nothing from a Servant, though he be Lord of all*;	1. NOW to illustrate the vast Preference of the Gospel to the legal Dispensation by a plain and familiar Similitude, I say, that the Heir of a good Estate, during all the Time of his Non-age, stands in a Manner on a Level with a meer Servant, as to Subjection, and Want of Liberty for using and enjoying his Inheritance: Though he be, in Right, the Proprietor of the Whole, he don't live like one entitled to all his Riches.
2 *But is under Tutors and Governors, until the Time appointed of the Father.*	2. But he is under the Direction and Discipline of Masters to educate him in such a Way, as may be most suitable to his present Circumstances, and to the low Conceptions of his young Mind; and is under the Allowance and Government of Guardians, or Trustees, to order all Things concerning him, and to manage his Estate for him, that he may be fitted to enter upon Possession of it, and to receive it with Advantage at such a Term of Life, as had been before-hand settled by his Father.

3. Even

3 Even so we, when we were Children, were in Bondage under the Elements of the World:

3. Even so, to apply this to the Case of those of us that are *Jewish*-believers, When under the Old Testament-Dispensation, which may be called the Infant-state of the Church, with respect to spiritual Light and Liberty, Privileges and Enjoyments, we were like Minors training up for a better State under the Gospel; we were then dealt with more like Servants than Sons and Heirs, as being under the servile and obscure Discipline of the Law, enslaved by its Terrors, and tied down to its typical Observances, which gave us only dawning Hints of the spiritual and heavenly Inheritance, that we were intitled to, by Virtue of the Promise made to *Abraham*. (*Chap.* iii. 18.) And which Observances, like the *A*, *B*, *C*, of Children, may be stiled the Principles or Rudiments of the World; because they consisted of Resemblances taken from worldly Things, and were suited to the Instruction and Government of Children, that are most affected and influenced by sensible Objects; and because they were so earthly in their own Nature, that they could not of themselves carry any one's Thoughts and Hopes, Views and Relish, beyond the Blessings of this World, to those of Heaven and Glory.

4 But when the Fulness of the Time was come, God sent forth his Son made of of a Woman, made under the Law.

4. But when the full Time was come, which God the Father, who gave us our Inheritance, had fore-appointed in his eternal Decrees, and fore-told and marked out in antient Prophecies; and which, by Reason of the general and great Degeneracy on one hand, and Expectations on the other amongst the *Jews*, was high Time for a Reformation, and for introducing a more illustrious State of Light, Liberty and Joy to the Children of God, that they might live and appear like those that stand in so near and dear a Relation to him; he then, in the Riches of his infinite Wisdom, Love and Grace, sent his own eternally pre-existent Son, in a Way of special Operation and Manifestation, into our World, that he, by wonderful Dispensation, might be conceived, and born of a Virgin; (*Matt.* i. 18—23.) and so might be emphatically and peculiarly the *Seed of the Woman*, miraculously made of her Substance, without the Concurrence of any Man, according to the first Promise of him; (*Gen.* iii. 15.) and that, having voluntarily assumed human Nature into personal Union with himself, he, who was both God and Man, might by a judicial Constitution be placed as a Subject both under the Precept and the Curse of the Law, which we were bound to have obeyed, but had transgressed, and thereby incurred its Penalty.

5 To redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.

5. The great Design of whose Incarnation, and being thus brought under the Law, was, that he might be fitted for, and go through a compleat Course of Obedience and Sufferings unto Death, in Answer to all its Demands, and at that dear Expence might redeem his People that were under the Law, and under its Curse; (*Chap.* iii. 10, 13.) to the End that those of us, who believe in him, might be

no longer under its condemning Sentence, nor under its rigorous Administration, but might be made Partakers of all the Privileges of the Gospel-state, that pertain to the Adoption of Children, even of such as are arrived at mature Age. (See the Note on *Chap.* iii. 21.)

6 *And because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*

6. And because God has so far dignified you, my Christian-brethren, whether ye be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, as to make you his adult Sons by a free Act of gracious Adoption, and to entitle you to, and give you Possession of, such high and glorious Privileges; therefore, as a Token and Proof of it, he has sent forth the holy Spirit from Heaven, who is the Spirit of the Son, as well as of the Father, and is communicated, by special Dispensation, through the exalted Head and Redeemer, to dwell in your Souls with a richer Abundance of Gifts and Graces, than were vouchsafed under the *Mosaic* Oeconomy; to form you into the Temper of the Children of God, and bear Witness with your Spirits that ye are so; (*Rom.* viii. 15, 16.) and to give you a humble Liberty and Boldness in your Dealings with God, whereby ye are taught and enabled to claim and call upon him, and to be ingenuously affected toward him with Desire, Faith and Love, with becoming Reverence and filial Obedience, with complacential Delight and Joy, and with holy Confidence in his Care and Kindness, and Zeal for his Honour and Glory, as your heavenly Father; which, to comprehend both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, I chuse to express in the *Hebrew* Language, by the Word *Abba*, and by another Word in the *Greek*, which answers to it, as it signifies *Father* (ὁ πατὴρ)

7 *Wherefore, thou art no more a Servant, but a Son; and if a Son, then an Heir of God thro' Christ.*

7. Whosoever therefore you be, that believes in Christ, you are no longer to be accounted and treated as a Servant, kept at a Distance, and subjected to a severe Discipline, as the Children of God in their Minority were under the Law; but you are to be look'd upon and dealt with, as a Son of ripe Age; and if you are a Son, then are you an Heir; yea, if a Son under the Liberty of the Gospel, then an Heir in *Possession* of a great Part of your Inheritance, as an Earnest of your enjoying the Whole in all its Grandeur and Delights, when you arrive at the *Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ*; (Eph. iv. 13.) an Heir, I say, of no less an Inheritance, than of the all-sufficient God himself for your Portion, in and through the Lord Jesus Christ, in his Right, and on his Account, and together with him, who is his eternal Son and *Heir of all Things*. (Heb. i. 2.) Surely then none of you can have any good Reason to return back to the Law, and lay the Grounds of your Acceptance with God in your Obedience to it.

8 *Howbeit, then when ye knew not God, ye did Service unto them which by Nature are no Gods.*

8. But, (ἀλλὰ) as to those of you that are *Gentile*-Believers, it is most of all absurd and unaccountably foolish in you to entertain a Thought of any thing like it: To convince you of this, and impress you with a deep Sense of it, let

let me remind you, that in the Days of your Unregeneracy, and all along in your State of Heathenism, ye were utter Strangers to the Knowledge of the only true God, and to all Promises of his Favour and Love, and all Discoveries of the Way, wherein ye might be discharged from the Guilt of your Sins, and find Acceptance with him to eternal Life; and being then ignorant of him, ye paid religious Service to Idols of your own Invention, whether Stocks or Stones, or the Sun, Moon and Stars, or some famous Heroes or Benefactors, or other imaginary Deities *, none of which had any proper Divinity in them; and therefore, whatsoever the Pretence might be, no religious Homage ought to have been offered to any of them, as not being Partakers of the Nature and Perfections of the true God, who only is to be worshipped and adored. (*Matt.* IV. 10.)

9 *But now after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly Elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in Bondage?*

9. But now, since ye have been brought, by the Light and Power of the Gospel, to the Knowledge of the only true God; or rather have, in his infinite Condescension and Grace, been taken Notice of, and particularly regarded by him, who has found you out, and brought you to the Knowledge of himself through Jesus Christ, and owned you for *his*; and now, after ye, or at least some of you, as I trust, have been approved, and freely accepted of him in the beloved; What an Infatuation and Piece of Ingratitude is it in any of you, to turn aside again from the Light and Grace of the Gospel, and from all its holy and delightful Liberty, to a Bondage, which ye were never under before, and consists in being subject to the dark Hints and severe Injunctions of the *Mosaic* Law, which are so *weak* as to be utterly insufficient to make Peace with God, or purge the Conscience from Guilt, or to secure from his Wrath, and obtain Acceptance with him; and are so poor and *beggarly*, as to be in themselves altogether incapable of enriching the Soul with spiritual Knowledge, Grace and Peace, or any solid Comfort and Satisfaction relating to its best and eternal Interests? And they are indeed now so impoverished, since their typical Meaning has been fulfilled in Christ, that there is nothing in them. How surprizing and inexcusable then is it, that even some of *you* who could have no antecedent Attachment to the Law, as the *Jews* had, should desire to go backwards, and put yourselves again under a Yoke of Servitude, instead of that,

* Here is a manifest Confutation of the Popish Distinction between *Dulia* and *Latria*, as if the former were a lower Kind of Worship, which may be given to Saints and Angels, and the latter only were to be appropriated to God: For the Apostle in condemning what these *Galatians* did, when they were idolatrous Heathens, says, (ἐδουλεύσατε) ye gave *Dulia* to them, which by Nature are no Gods; assigning that as the Reason why such Religious Homage ought not to have been paid to them. And this Reason holds equally strong, not only against all religious Adoration of Saints and Angels, but even of our Lord Jesus Christ himself, unless he were *by Nature God*.

though of another Sort, which ye formerly were enslaved by, and are now happily delivered from *?

10 *Ye observe Days, and Months, and Times, and Years.*

10. That ye have strong Propensions to blend the *Mosaic* Law with the Gospel, as if ye could not otherwise be justified before God, is too apparent from your being, as I perceive, zealous for observing (like the Carnal *Jews* that lay a great Stress upon these Things) their Sabbaths and New-moons, (See the Note on *Col.* ii. 16.) as well as their first and seventh Months; and their solemn Festivals, such as the Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles; and their seventh Year of Release, and fiftieth Year of Jubilee, as tho' the whole Law were still as much in Force as ever.

11 *I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you Labour in vain.*

11. When I think of these sad Defections, I can't but be tenderly concern'd for you, and terribly afraid, lest all the Pains I have taken with you, by faithfully and laboriously talking in Private, and preaching in Public, should eventually prove ineffectual, and to no Manner of good Purpose, as to many of you †; and so all my Hopes of you should be disappointed, and ye should fall into Perdition.

12 *Brethren, I beseech you, be as I* am; *for I* am *as ye* are: *Ye have not injured me at all.*

12. Let me then, my beloved Brethren, earnestly intreat you, by all the Endearments of one that heartily wishes your Happiness, to entertain the same Sentiments, as to the important Article of Justification, with myself, who once was as zealous of the Law, as any of you can be, tho', through the Grace given to me, I now *count all Things but Loss for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, &c.* (Phil. iii. 8, 9.) And I beg of you to be the same in Affection to me, as I am to you; for I am so much one with you, as to be willing to condescend to, and bear with you in the Use of *Jewish* Rites, while they are left as Matters of Indifference, and even to use them myself, on special Occasions, (See the Notes on *Acts* xvi. 3. and xviii. 18. and xxi. 24 — 26.) as far as may be consistent with the Truth and Liberty of the Gos-

* Their *turning again to weak and beggarly Elements*, and desiring *again to be in Bondage*, cannot be understood, as if they had been used to those Elements, and that Bondage before; because, as appears from the foregoing Verse, they had been converted, not from *Jewish* Proselytism, but from *Idolatrous* Heathenism, and so never had been under the *Mosaic* Law before; and therefore it seems necessary to understand the Apostle to mean that, as they had been under Heathen-Bondage, and inslaved by the Principles and Practices of so mean and wretched a Religion, from which they were now deliver'd, it was very strange that they should desire to be circumcised, and thereby obliged to observe the whole Law of *Moses* for Justification, and so come again into Bondage, which, though it was of a different Nature from what they were under before; yet was really a State of Bondage, directly contrary to the Light and Liberty of the Gospel, into which they had been brought.

† If the *Galatians* had not laid a Stress upon their legal Observances, as *necessary* to Justification, I can hardly think that the Apostle would have expressed his Fears so strongly, as he does here, lest all his Labour with them should prove to be in vain; and that he would have carried the Matter so far, as to tell them roundly, that on this Account Christ would be of no Effect to them. (*Chap.* v. 4.) For tho' they might have been in a gross Mistake, as to the Obligation of observing the *Mosaic* Law, yet it would not surely have been a fundamental Error, inconsistent with Salvation; unless they depended upon it, as necessary to their Acceptance with God. (See the Note on *Chap.* v. 6.)

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pel, and conducive to the Welfare of your Souls †; and my Heart is with you, as much as yours can be with me: Ye may therefore be ſure that I have no Ill-will to you, in what I have been ſaying; nor indeed have I had any Occaſion for it hitherto, ſince I never yet received any Ill-Treatment from you: And I love you ſo well that, if the Attempts of Falſe Teachers to ſupplant me, *(ver* 17.) have ever carried you into any Deſigns of *perſonal* Diſreſpect or Injury to me, I can eaſily overlook it, ſo far as it only relates to myſelf.

13 *Ye know how through Infirmity of the Fleſh, I preached the Goſpel unto you at the firſt.*

13. As to *my Affection* toward you, ye well know, and can't but remember, that when I firſt came among you, ſuch was my ſolicitous Concern and earneſt Deſire for your Salvation, that I labour'd abundantly in explaining, proving and recommending the Goſpel of Chriſt to you, under great Difficulties and Sufferings in the Fleſh, to the Impairing of my bodily Strength; under injurious Defamations and Reproaches; and under conſiderable Diſadvantages from the deſpicable Appearance of my Perſon, and the ungraceful Manner of my Delivery. (2 *Cor.* x. 10. *and* xi. 6. *and* xii. 7) *.

14 *And my Temptation which was in my Fleſh, ye deſpiſed not, nor rejected; but received me as an Angel of God,* even *as Chriſt Jeſus.*

14. And as to *your Affection* to me, ye were then ſo wonderfully taken with my Miniſtry, that (οὐκ ἐξουθενήσατε) ye did not ſlight it, or ſet me at nought, much leſs did ye reject the Doctrine I preached, or (οὐδὲ ἐξεπτύσατε) diſdain me, like one that deſerved to be ſpit upon with Contempt and Indignation, as ſome others have done, on account of the Infirmities and humbling Trials, that I was exerciſed with in the Body: But ye, nevertheleſs, entertain'd and embrac'd my Meſſage, and me for its ſake, with as much Readineſs and Pleaſure, as a Meſſenger of God and Embaſſador of Chriſt, as if I had been one of the holy Angels, whom God had diſpatch'd immediately from Heaven to deliver it to you; yea, as if I had been even the Meſſiah himſelf, whom God has anointed to be the only Saviour.

15 *Where is then the Bleſſedneſs ye ſpake of? For I bear you Record, that if* it had been *poſſible, ye would have plucked out your own Eyes, and have given them to me.*

15. What then is now become of all thoſe high Expreſſions of ardent Wiſhes for my Proſperity in the Work of the Lord, which at that Time ye heaped upon me, and of all the Happineſs, which ye then ſo ſolemnly, and with ſuch Zeal, and Appearances of Sincerity, profeſſed to have and hope for, by Means of my miniſtring the Goſpel to you? Is all this forgot and loſt, and like to come to nothing, though ye then talked ſo much about it? For I my-

† As the Apoſtle's chief Deſire was to bring them over to what he knew to be the Truth of the Goſpel; (*ver.* 19.) ſo he elſewhere tells us that, as far as lawfully might be, he was *made all Things to all Men, that he might ſave ſome,* and that he *pleas'd all Men in all Things, not ſeeking his own Profit, but the Profit of many, that they might be ſaved.* (1 *Cor.* ix. 22. *and* x. 33) And therefore Thoughts of this Kind are taken into the Paraphraſe, together with an Agreement in Affection.

* Some or other, and eſpecially the laſt of theſe Trials, as the Apoſtle calls them in the next Verſe, ſeem to be meant by the *Infirmity* or *Weakneſs* (ἀσθένειαν) of his Fleſh. But as the *Galatians* well knew what he referr'd to, there was no Occaſion for him to particularize them. And this, as Mr. *Lock* obſerves, is an Inſtance of the unavoidable Obſcurity of ſome Paſſages in epiſtolary Writings without any Fault of the Author. But we ſhould remember that this is ſuch an Obſcurity, as relates to Things of little Importance to us.

ſelf,

self, having been an Eye-witness of it, must testify concerning you that, as far as I could judge by Words and Actions, such was the Fervor of your Love and Joy, that had it been a possible Thing, and could it have been of any Advantage to me, ye would have undergone all the Severity and Inconvenience of even plucking your own Eyes out of your Heads, to put them into mine.

16 Am I therefore become your Enemy, because I tell you the Truth?

16. How then comes it to pass, that ye should now grow so cool to me, who am still the same to you; and that ye should be so ready to give up those very Doctrines, which ye then so much admired and were affected with; and should now think of forsaking me and them, and of adhering to Judaizing Teachers and their pernicious Errors? What is it, that could induce you to take such an unhappy and surprizing Turn? Is it because I have been plain and faithful in maintaining the Truth and Importance of the pure Doctrine of the Gospel, and in warning you of the dangerous Consequence of mixing the Works of the Law with Faith in Christ for Justification? Must I be counted your Enemy for this? Why, this was the most kind and friendly Thing I could do for you; as such I designed it, and ye ought to have received it: But if any of you think otherwise, and are prejudiced against me for it, the greater is your Guilt, and the more are ye to be pitied.

17 They zealously affect you, but *not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them.*

17. As to those *false Teachers*, that would pervert you, and prejudice your Minds against me, They profess to have an extraordinary Affection and zealous Concern for you; but it is not with an upright Design for your spiritual Advantage, nor do they act honourably (καλως) in their Attempts upon you; nay, they principally aim at alienating your Hearts from me, and my apostolic Doctrine and Authority, that they may engross you to themselves, and bring you into a blind and tame Submission to their own usurp'd Dominion over your Faith; they would shut out all your Regards to me and my Office, that the whole Tide of your Esteem, Honour and Applause may run toward them.

18 But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good Thing, and not only when I am present with you.

18. But it is (καλον) a very beautiful, laudable and excellent Temper, much to be desired, that your Zeal be always carried out uniformly to the Person * or Thing, that is really worthy of it; and that it be so, not merely during my Presence with you, to win you over to a good Opinion of myself, whom ye then took to be a good Man; and of the Gospel, which, as ye then thought, is certainly the best News that ever was brought to Sinners of our World: This would be a plain Evidence that your Impressions were well-grounded on Judgment, and fix'd in your Hearts; whereas

* *In a good Thing* (εν καλω) may likewise be render'd in a *good Man*, by which the Apostle is supposed in his modest Way, to mean himself: But as he all along speaks of his *Doctrine*, as well as of his *Person*, it seems best to include both.

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your unſteady Temper and Conduct have a quite contrary Aſpect.

19 *My little Children, of whom I travel in Birth again, until Chriſt be formed in you.*

19. My dear, tho' weak Children in the Faith, whom I hoped I had inſtrumentally begotten to Chriſt through the Goſpel, (1 *Cor.* iv. 15.) I ſeek not yours, but you; and don't value what ye think of me, if ye be but brought home to Chriſt, that he may have the Glory of ſaving you; and therefore, like a Woman in the painful Hour of Child-birth, I have now again as ſtrong Throws and Agonies of Spirit, and as preſſing a Solicitude for your Recovery, as ever I formerly had for your Converſion from Idolatry to the Chriſtian-Religion; and I can't but go on in the Vehemence of my Concern to uſe all poſſible Means with you, till I may have the Pleaſure of finding, that the pure Doctrine of Juſtification by Chriſt alone thro' Faith in him, is really formed and fix'd in your Minds and Hearts, ſo as to influence you, like a vital Principle, in all your Dealings with God for eternal Life; and that all the Beauties of his holy Image are impreſſed upon you.

20 *I deſire to be preſent with you now, and to change my Voice: For I ſtand in doubt of you.*

20. So great is my Deſire after you, that, were it in my Power, I could heartily wiſh myſelf to be at this very Time in your Company to talk freely with you, that I might confirm the Truth, anſwer Objections, ſilence Cavils, and ſatisfy Doubts and Scruples by Word of Mouth, which can't be done ſo well by a Letter; and might vary my Diſcourſe with you, in a Way of Encouragement or Rebuke, as Occaſions require. And O how would it rejoice my very Soul to find Room for ſpeaking with a ſofter Tone of Voice, and with greater Encouragement to you, than your preſent threatning Circumſtances ſeem to admit of! For, to tell you the Truth, by what I have learnt of late concerning your Principles and Behaviour, I am much in doubt, whether the Work of Grace has ever been effectually wrought in ſome of your Hearts; and whether many of you may not, at length, contrary to my former Hopes, prove to be utter Apoſtates.——But, to return to my main Argument,

21 *Tell me, ye that deſire to be under the Law, do ye not hear the Law?*

21. I would ſeriouſly aſk thoſe of you, that are inclined to be under the Law for Juſtification, by your own Obedience to it; and I beg that your own Conſciences would anſwer me, as in the Fear and Preſence of God, and as though ye were now actually ſtanding before his awful Bar in Judgment; When that Law is read in your religious Aſſemblies, or elſewhere, Do ye not hear and attend to, or do ye not underſtand and conſider, what dreadful Things it denounces againſt all, that are under it to be dealt with according to it? (*Chap.* iii. 10.) And do ye never reflect in particular, how the Writings of *Moſes*, whom ye ſeem to be ſo fond of, has figured out the wide Difference there is between thoſe that ſeek Juſtification by the Works of the Law, and thoſe that ſeek it alone by Faith in Chriſt?

22. For

22 *For it is written, that Abraham had two Sons, the one by a Bond Maid, the other by a Free Woman.*

22 For there it is recorded (*Gen.* xvi. 15, and xxi. 2, 3.) of *Abraham*, the Father of the Faithful, with whom God made his Covenant and with his Seed, that he had two Sons which were Types of different Sorts of Dispensations, and of different Sorts of that Patriarch's Seed: One was *Ishmael* by *Hagar*, a young Woman, who was no better than an *Egyptian*, and a Slave under Bonds of Servitude to her Mistress, (*Gen.* xvi. 1, 2.) and the other was *Isaac* by *Sarah*, his proper Wife, who, as such, was a Free-woman entitled to the Privileges of her Relation to such a Husband *.

23 *But he who was of the Bond Woman, was born after the Flesh; but he of the Free Woman was by Promise.*

23. But there was likewise this further Difference between them, *Ishmael*, the Son whom he had by *Hagar* the Bond-slave, was born only according to the common Law of natural Generation, while both the Parents were young enough to have Children in the ordinary Course of Things; whereas *Isaac*, who was *Abraham*'s Son by *Sarah* his lawful Wife, was given him in an extraordinary, and even miraculous Manner, by Virtue of a free and gracious Promise, at an unexpected Time of Life, when both Father and Mother were past Age, and naturally incapable of having any Issue. (*Gen* xviii. 10, 11.)

24 *Which Things are an Allegory. For these are the two Covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to Bondage, which is Agar.*

24. These Things, though really Facts that are related only in an historical Manner, were intended of God to be, and accordingly are allegorized in Scripture for spiritual Purposes † as, figurative Representations of the miserable Condition of those, on one hand, that are under the *Sinai*-covenant, and, like the *Jewish* Zealots of this Day, use it merely as a Covenant of Works; and of the Happiness of those, on the other, who, as true Believers in Christ, depend intirely on the free Promises of the Covenant of Grace for all Acceptance with God through him: For in this symbolical History, these two Women and their respective Sons signify those two Covenants, the first of them represented by *Hagar*, is that which was made between God and *Israel* at Mount *Sinai*, (See the Note on *Heb.* viii. 6.) and which by the terrible Manner of its Delivery, the Strictness of its Precepts, and the Severity of its Curse, tends to the begetting

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* As *Abraham* had more Sons by *Keturah*, (Gen. xxvi. 1, 2) which the Apostle takes no Notice of, it seems that there was something peculiarly prefigurative in *Ishmael* and *Isaac*, rather than in them.

† Mr. *Peirce* accurately renders these Words (ἅτινα ἐστιν ἀλληγορούμενα) *which Things are allegoriz'd*; and has taken a great deal of critical Pains to shew, that the Apostle here refers to *Isaiah*'s allegorizing this History, *Chap.* liv. 1, which he indeed thinks was not *originally* design'd to represent the State of Things, to which the Prophet and the Apostle apply them. But as that learned Author himself afterwards observes, that *Sarah*'s being spoken of as the Mother of the believing *Gentiles*, is very agreeable to other Places of Scripture, such as *John* viii. 39, 41, *Rom.* ix. 7—9, and 1 *Pet.* iii. 6, which represent all the Children of God as the Children of *Abraham*, and particularly as *Abraham*'s Children by *Sarah*; I don't see why it may not be allow'd that *Sarah* and *Hagar* were *originally* design'd of God, tho', perhaps, not then understood by *Abraham*, as figurative Representations of the Difference that should be made between the carnal and spiritual Seed of *Abraham*. (See *Peirce*'s 1st Dissertation at the End of his Paraphrase on the *Philipians*.)

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of a servile and enslaved Temper of Spirit, and would certainly subject them that are under it to the worst of all Captivity and everlasting Destruction, were they left to its Terms without any further Relief, which was provided for in the Promise to *Abraham*, and is actually brought in by the Gospel.

25 *For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem, which now is, and is in Bondage with her Children.*

25. For this *Hagar* and her Son, which were not to inherit the Blessing promised to *Abraham* and his Seed, but were cast out of his Family and Covenant, (*v.* 30.) * are a lively and affecting Representation of the rejected State of those that are under the Law, which was delivered at Mount-*Sinai* in the Desert of *Arabia* †, and by the Tenor of which they were to fall under a Curse, instead of inheriting a Blessing, who did not in all Things conform to it: (*Chap.* iii. 10.) And this answers to the present State of the earthly *Jerusalem*, which is no longer the Seat of the divine Presence, but is abandoned of God for the Infidelity of its Inhabitants, who are in the most dreadful Bondage to Sin and Satan, as *Hagar* and her Son *Ishmael*, and their Descendants were, upon their Exclusion from the Family of *Abraham*, and from all the Blessings of his Covenant.

26 *But Jerusalem, which is above, is free; which is the Mother of us all.*

26. But the heavenly *Jerusalem*, the Church of the living God, which consists of true Believers in Christ, that seek to be justified through Faith in him alone, is delivered from the Curse of the Law, and made Partaker of all the Blessings of the Gospel, which were promised to *Abraham* and his Seed. (*Chap.* iii. 13, 14.) This Gospel-church, which is of a heavenly Nature, and has its Original from Heaven, tends toward it and shall be admitted into it, was typified by *Sarah* the Free-woman, and by *Isaac* the Son of the Promise; and may be stiled the Parent of all of us who believe, whether we be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, as we were begotten to the Faith of Christ by Means of the Word and Ordinances dispensed therein; even as *Sarah* was the Mother of *Isaac*, and he was a Figure of all the true Seed of the Covenant made with *Abraham*. And this may be still further confirmed, particularly with respect to believing *Gentiles* under the Gospel-state, by a Testimony of Scripture, which speaks of this very Thing also in the allegorical Way.

27 *For it is written, Rejoice, thou Barren, that bearest not;*

27. For it is written in a Prophesy of New Testament Times, and with a Reference to *Sarah* and *Hagar*, (*Isa.* liv. 1. See the Note on *v.* 24.) Rejoice and be exceeding glad,

* Here and in the foregoing Verse we have a plain Instance of the Verb *is*, as used for *signifies* or *represents*, and that with respect to the Covenants or Testaments. (Διαθῆκαι ver. 24.) No Wonder therefore that it should be taken in this Sense, when in the institution of the Lord's Supper, Christ says of the Bread, *This is my Body*, and speaking of the Wine says, *This Cup is the New Testament in my Blood.* (Luke xxii. 19, 20.)

† *Sinai* and *Horeb* were probably two Tops of the same Mountain in *Arabia Petræa*; or rather, *Horeb* was a common Name of the whole Ridge of Mountains on which *Sinai* was situated, and was called *Horeb* from the excessive Dryness of it. See *Univers. Hist.* Fol. Vol. I. pag. 481.

break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: For the Desolate hath many more Children than she which hath an Husband.

ye *Gentile*-Nations, who like a Woman that has no Child, were for many Ages destitute of a Seed to serve the Lord, that should be accounted to him for a Generation, as *Sarah* was till she came to be ninety Years old, when by the ordinary Course of Nature there could be no Hope of her bearing a Son. (*Gen.* xvii. 17.) Break forth into strong and vehement Acclamations of Joy; and shout aloud in your Praises, O ye who have never hitherto bred and brought forth any Childreu for God, to bear his holy Image, and to glorify and enjoy him: For such is his amazing Love and Compassion to you, whom he has seemed so long to neglect, that as the Descendents of *Sarah*, who was desolate and past Hope of Child-bearing, are more numerous than those of *Hagar*, whom *Abraham* also took to Wife, and who had a Son by him while she was in her teeming Age; so under the Gospel-dispensation much greater Numbers of Children shall be born to God, and adopted into his Family from among you, who till then were out of the Pale of his Covenant, and had no Expectation of his espousing you to himself, than ever were found among the natural Seed of *Abraham*, who, for a great Series of Time before, were married under the Mount-*Sinai*-Dispensation in a visible Covenant to him, as their Husband.

28 *Now we, Brethren, as Isaac was, are the Children of Promise.*

28. Now, to apply this important Allegory, We, my Brethren in the Faith of Christ, whether we be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, are by special Grace the true Children of the Promise made to *Abraham* and his Seed, in Distinction from those that seek to be justified by the Works of the Law; even as *Isaac*, the Son of *Sarah* the Free-woman, was born by virtue of the Promise, and was the Heir of its Blessings, in Distinction from *Ishmael*, the Son of *Hagar* the Bond-woman.

29 *But as then he that was born after the Flesh, persecuted him* that was born *after the Spirit, even so* it is *now.*

29. But as in that Age, *Ishmael*, who was born according to the usual Course of Nature, and had no Advantages but what pertained to the Flesh, mock'd and derided, (*Gen.* xxi. 9.) and so with his malignant Tongue, at least, persecuted *Isaac*, who was born by an extraordinary Operation of the Spirit, according to the Promise given to *Abraham* that he should have a Son by his Wife *Sarah*; and who was indeed the Inheriter of all the Covenant-Promises made to him and his Seed, (*Gen.* xvii. 19.) notwithstanding *Ishmael*'s insulting him for his Pretensions of this Kind*. Even so it is at this Day, with respect to us, who adhere to

* It was immediately upon *Ishmael*'s mocking *Isaac*, that *Sarah* spake to *Abraham* to *cast out the Bond-woman and her Son*, assigning this Reason for it, that *the Son of the Bond-woman should not be Heir with her Son*. (Gen. xxi. 9, 10.) It therefore seems that what *Ishmael* had mock'd *Isaac* for, was his claiming to be their Father's sole Heir; and that this awaken'd *Sarah*'s warm Resentment against the Bond-woman and her Son.

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the pure Gospel of Christ, and are born of God and Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whom *Jewish* Zealots and Self-Justiciaries are exceeding violent, and highly enraged against, for maintaining, that they only, *which be of Faith, are blessed with faithful* Abraham. (*Chap.* iii. 9.)

30 *Nevertheless, what saith the Scripture? Cast out the Bond-woman and her Son: For the Son of the Bond-woman shall not be Heir with the Son of the Free-woman.*

30. Nevertheless, the Consequences of these Things will be very terrible to them, and happy to us, as they are exemplified in the Case of those two Sons of *Abraham*: For what doth the Scripture tell us with Regard hereunto? It introduces *Sarah* as saying to her Husband, and God as approving and confirming it, (*Gen.* xxi. 10, 12) Expel the Bond-woman and her insolent Son out of your House and Favour; for I can't bear, that the Son of your Bond-slave should inherit Covenant-Blessings with my Son *Isaac*, whom I, your lawful Wife, have bore to you. In like Manner God will exclude from his Church and Covenant all those, that seek to be justified by the Law; and will not suffer them to inherit his Kingdom of Grace and Glory together with those, that are his Children through Faith in Christ. (*Chap.* iii. 26.)

31 *So then, Brethren, we are not Children of the Bond-woman, but of the Free.*

31. So then, my Christian Brethren, to sum up all that I have been saying on this Point, We, who believe on the Lord Jesus alone for Justification to eternal Life, are not of those that, seeking it by the Law, were prefigured by *Ishmael*, the Son of *Hagar*, and shall be shut out from the Blessings of the Gospel-state here, and from the heavenly Inheritance hereafter; but we are the Children of the Promise, signified by *Isaac*, the Son of *Sarah*, that are entitled to all the Blessings of Grace and Glory: And therefore we have nothing to do with the *Mosaic* servile Dispensation; much less are we to imagine that any of its ceremonial Rites are necessary to our Acceptance with God.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What Darkness and Bondage of Spirit are God's own Children subject to, when, like those under the legal Dispensation, they have but low Views of the Light and Liberty of the Gospel! They live more like Servants than Sons and Heirs. But how great and glorious are the Advantages of the New-Testament-state, that are brought in by the Son of God! His Father sent him at the appointed and fittest Time to assume human Nature into personal Union with himself, and he, being the promised Seed of the Woman, became subject to the Law in his People's Stead, that he might redeem them from its Curse, and from the servile Temper which the *Sinai*-Covenant produced in them while they were under it; and that they might be admitted to all the Privileges of the Children of God, as arrived at mature Age: And what a sure and delightful Evidence have we, that this is our happy Case, when God gives us the Spirit of his Son, to embolden our humble Claims of him as our Father, and to witness with our Spirits that we are his Sons and Heirs thro' Jesus Christ! If we have any Experience of this, it is because God took a gracious Notice of us before we knew him, or turn'd from all our Idols to him, who is by Nature God, and the only Object of religious Worship. But how surprizing is their Ingratitude and Folly, who, after all Professions of this Kind, depart from the Gospel-Doctrine of Justification thro' Faith in Christ to the Works of the Law! A Defection in this great Point gives Reason to fear, lest all the Pains that have been bestowed

on such, with hopeful Appearances of Success, should prove to be in vain, and they should turn utter Apostates! O how tenderly concern'd are faithful Ministers for Persons in this threatning Situation, whom they formerly hoped they had been Instruments of begetting to Christ! They travail as it were in Birth again, that his true Doctrine and holy Image may be form'd in them; they study to accommodate their Discourses to their Circumstances, and would be glad to speak comfortable Things to them; they are grieved at the Unsteadiness of their Zeal, which ought to be always carried out to only good Men and good Things; and they can't but solemnly warn them of their Danger, and of the artful Methods of those, that lie in wait to deceive them, under feign'd Pretences of great Affection to them, while they only mean to proselyte them to themselves, and alienate their Hearts from those, whom they justly esteem'd before. What can be a more likely Means, by the Blessing of God, to reclaim such Revolters, than to remind them of the terrible Things that the Law says to such as are under it? This may be learnt from the Instances of *Hagar* the Bond-woman, in Opposition to *Sarah* the Free-woman, and their respective Sons; the figurative Meaning of which is, that they who rely on their own Performances of any Kind, according to the Covenant of Works, will be excluded from the Kingdom of Heaven; but they who adhere by Faith to the free Promise thro' Jesus Christ, according to the Gospel, will inherit eternal Life. These are bless'd indeed; and how much soever they may be derided and persecuted for their Profession of this important Doctrine, they may rejoice in Hope that the Issue of all will make them rich Amends for ever.

CHAP. V.

The Apostle applies the foregoing Discourse in an earnest Exhortation, enforced by various Arguments, to stand fast in the Liberty of the Gospel, 1—12. *To take Heed of abusing that Liberty by indulging a sinful Temper, contrary to the great Law of Love,* 13—15. *And to walk in the Spirit, and not fulfil the Lusts of the Flesh, which are opposite to each other, and the Works of which respectively are described at large,* 16—26.

TEXT.

1 *STAND fast therefore in the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the Yoke of Bondage.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. SINCE, as has been observed, there is so much Danger in the Scheme of those false Teachers, that would carry you off from the Gospel to the Law of *Moses* for Justification; and since true Believers are the Children of God, represented by *Isaac*, the Son of the Free-woman, I earnestly beseech and exhort you, my Brethren, to maintain your Ground, like Soldiers that stand firm in Rank and File; and to abide stedfastly in the Belief, Possession and Practice of that happy, holy and delightful Freedom from the Law, as a Covenant of Works and from its Curse, as also from all Obligations of Obedience to its ceremonial Precepts; which noble Freedom is brought in by the Satisfaction that Christ has made, as a Priest, in fulfilling both the ceremonial and moral Law; and by his Settlement in the Gospel, and enlighting our Minds and impressing our Hearts according to it, as a Prophet and King: And let Love, Gratitude and Obedience to him, as well as a Concern for the Safety and Comfort of your own Souls, engage you to take the utmost

Care that ye be not incumbered and oppressed again, (See the Note on *Chap.* iv. 9.) with a servile Yoke, which Circumcision would lay upon you to comply with the Whole of the *Mosaic* Law, as if that were necessary to Salvation, (*v.* 3. and *Acts* xv. 1.)

2 *Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.*

2. Observe the terrible Consequence, I *Paul*, the inspired Apostle (*Chap.* i. 1.) who am unjustly defamed, as though I preached up Circumcision among some People to serve a Turn; (See the Note on *v.* 11.) even I do solemnly declare, and leave it as a standing Record, that if ye be circumcised under an Apprehension of its being necessary to your Acceptance with God, nothing that Christ has done and suffered, or that his Gospel reveals, will be of any saving Advantage to you.

3 *For I testify again to every Man that is circumcised, that he is a Debtor to do the whole Law.*

3. For as I have always maintained in my Ministrations everywhere; so I now repeat it with great Earnestness, as a most concerning Truth, to every Man, be he *Jew* or *Gentile*, who is circumcised with this View; that he is thereby obliged, under Pain of Condemnation, to keep the whole *Mosaic* Law, which is such a strict Condition of Life, as none in his present fallen State ever can fulfil; and yet for the least Failure therein he remains under the Curse, (*Chap.* iii. 10.) and so can never obtain his End.

4. *Christ is become of no Effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law; ye are fallen from Grace.*

4. The Blood and Righteousness, Gospel and Spirit of the anointed Saviour will be of no Avail to any of you; but ye are, as it were discharged from Christ, (κατηργηθητε απο τȣ χριςȣ) that seek Pardon and Acceptance by the Works of the Law, and so set up a Righteousness of your own instead of, or together with his for that Purpose; ye hereby practically renounce, and fall away * from the Doctrine of Justification freely by God's Grace through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus, which ye once made a Profession of, and by which alone any of you can be saved.

5 *For we through the Spirit wait for the Hope of Righteousness by Faith.*

5. For, through the Light and Influence of the Holy Spirit according to the Gospel, we *Jews* as well as *Gentiles*, that believe to the saving of our Souls, look and wait with earnest Desire, Expectation and Patience for eternal Life, which is the great Object of our Hope, (*Col.* i. 5. and *Tit.* ii. 13.) not on Account of any Righteousness of our own, but merely on the Foot of the Righteousness of Christ, as our only Title to it through Faith in him, which Faith his Spirit likewise works in us.

6 *For in Jesus Christ, neither Circumcision availeth a-*

6. For with Respect to Interest in Christ, and Justification by Virtue of our federal and vital Union with him, a being merely circumcised, or not circumcised, under the

* *Grace* here plainly signifies, as it doth in *Tit.* ii. 10, 11, and other Places, *the Doctrine of Grace:* For *that* is what the Apostle had all along been speaking of, in Opposition to the Law and its Works.

ny thing, nor Uncircumcision, but Faith which worketh by Love.

New Testament Dispensation, signifies nothing at all *; our State in Christ is no Way affected by either of them, while Circumcision is not considered as a Recommendation, nor the Want of it as a Hindrance to our Acceptance with God: But the only Thing, which according to Gospel-constitution avails to this Purpose, is such an effectual Faith, as rests upon Christ alone for Salvation, and is proved to be sincere by its powerful Influence on the Heart to render him precious to us, and engage our affectionate Love to and Delight in him, and in his Members, Word and Ways for his Sake, together with a universal Benevolence to all Men, according to the native Disposition of *a new Creature*, (*Chap.* vi. 15.)

7 *Ye did run well, who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the Truth?*

7. Ye, my Brethren, did set out, to all Appearance, exceeding well, and for some Time proceeded and press'd forward with a promising Zeal in your Profession of the Doctrine of Justification by Faith in Christ, like Persons that ran in earnest for the great Prize of Salvation alone through him. Who then is it, (pray consider this Matter seriously with the Reasons of it) that has stopped you in your Way, or driven you back from it, that ye should not persist in a Persuasion of, and yield yourselves up by an obediential Faith to, the Authority of Christ, according to the Truth of the Gospel, with respect to this main Point, which enters so deeply into your Dealings with God for eternal Life?

8 *This Persuasion* cometh *not of him that calleth you.*

8. Whosoever he be that has given this pernicious Turn to your Notions and Practice, I am very sure that your present Judaizing Sentiments, so directly contrary to the whole Design of Christianity, about the Grounds of Acceptance with God, is not owing to any thing ever said by me, who minister'd the Gospel to you in a quite contrary Strain, and was instrumental in bringing you over to the Christian-Faith; (see the Note on *Chap.* i. 6.) nor is it derived from that God, who spoke and work'd by me in calling you to the Knowledge of Christ, and of the Way of Salvation alone thro' him, and *that*, as I hoped, in an effectual Manner.

9 *A little Leaven leaveneth the whole Lump.*

9. Some corrupt Influence must have insinuated itself among you from *Satan* and his Instruments, tho', perhaps, at first but in one particular Point, and by the Management of but one or two Persons, and may hitherto have perverted only a Few of you; yet remember, it will operate with malignant and spreading Efficacy, unless timely prevented, to the Infecting of your whole Scheme of evangelical Prin-

* *The Indifference*, with which the Apostle here speaks of *Circumcision*, makes it apparent, that his Argument, all along against it, is not to be understood, merely of the Thing itself, but of the *Stress* that was laid upon it, as *necessary* to Salvation, and as binding to an Observation of the whole Law under the Notion of a Condition of Life. (See the Note on *Chap.* iv. 11.)

ciples, and one way or other of the whole Church; even as a little Leaven diffuses itself by an insensible, but powerful Fermentation, till it sours the whole Mass of Dough into which it is cast.

10 *I have Confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: But he that troubleth you, shall bear* his *Judgment, whosoever he be.*

10. I have indeed mentioned my great Fear about you; (Chap. iv. 11, 20) and yet, after all, I can't but have a prevailing charitable Hope, through the Grace of the Lord Jesus, concerning many of you, at least, that when ye come to reflect on my Fears, and solemn Warnings, with the Reasons of them, ye will think no otherwise, than I myself do, about the Danger of this Infection, and the Necessity of making a full and speedy Stand against it *; and will pass a Church-Censure upon him, be he ever so great or famous, (ὁ ταρασσων) who is the principal Instrument of throwing such Confusion among you, of perplexing your Minds, and even terrifying you into his destructive Errors: But, whether ye do your Duty herein or not, he, who has a great deal to answer for, will sooner or later fall under the righteous Judgment of God, to be punished in this World, or the next, unless *he give him Repentance to the Acknowledgment of the Truth.* (2 Tim. ii. 25, 26.)

11 *And I, Brethren, if I yet preach Circumcision, why do I yet suffer Persecution? Then is the Offence of the Cross ceased.*

11. But (δὲ) as to myself, Brethren, If, as some have invidiously reported †, I after all preach up Circumcision as necessary to Salvation, or plead for the believing *Gentiles* being circumcised in order thereunto, How comes it to pass that I still undergo, and chearfully submit to the severest Persecutions from the bigotted *Jews*, as it is notorious I do where-ever I come? Were I once to comply with their corrupt Notions about super-adding the Works of the Law to the Merits of Christ, the chief Ground of their being offended at the Doctrine of Salvation by a crucified Saviour would immediately cease, and I should be no longer exposed to their furious Outrage for preaching it. My great and continual Sufferings therefore on this Account are a standing Confutation of all Suggestions of this Nature to defame me.

12 *I would they*

12. I heartily wish that they who have so grievously per-

* 'Tis not improbably thought that *Judgment* may have a Reference to the Censure of the Church, which the Apostle wishes might be inflicted on this Person and his Associates, *v.* 12, whom he had liken'd to *a little Leaven* that *leaveneth the whole Lump*, ver. 9, just as he did the incestuous Person, when he wrote to the *Corinthians* to cast him out of the Church, 1 *Cor.* v. 5, 6. And yet it is proper to take in a Consideration of the Judgment of God; because this confirms, and gives the most awful Sanction to a Church-Censure duely pronounced; and God will deal with the Man that deserves it, whether the Church doth its Duty towards him, or not.

† The Apostle here plainly intimates, that some, to lessen and expose his Character, had suggested as if he were an unstable Man, preaching up Circumcision in some Places, tho' in others he preached it down. They might probably take Occasion for this from his circumcising *Timothy*, to prevent Offence to the *Jews*, and remove that Obstruction to the Usefulness of his Ministry among them; (See the Note on *Acts* xvi. 3) and from his speaking for a charitable Forbearance, as he often did, with regard to Circumcision, when no Stress was laid upon it, and yet *Jewish* Prejudices remain'd in its Favour.

were even cut off which trouble you.

plexed and disturbed you, and subverted the Faith of some among you, were cast out of the Church by a solemn Sentence of Excommunication in the Name of the Lord Jesus; and so turned over to him for the Vindication of his own Cause, and bringing them to Repentance; or that in God's own Way they may be hindered from bringing any further Mischief and Dishonour upon his Name, Church and Gospel.

13 *For, Brethren, ye have been called unto Liberty: Only use not Liberty for an Occasion to the Flesh, but by Love serve one another.*

13. For ye, my Brethren, have been called by the Gospel to a noble Liberty of Spirit in dealing with God as your Father, and in your Deliverance from ceremonial Observances, and from the Curse of the Law; a Liberty which ought not to be broke in upon by any one whatsoever, and which ye ought to abide by as more valuable than your Lives: Only remember that it is not a Liberty, which discharges you from Obligations to keep the moral Law as the Law of your Creation, and the indispensible and unchangeable Rule of Righteousness; and therefore it is not to be abused unto Licentiousness, and taking Occasion to gratify your Pride, Passion and Sensuality, or any other Corruption of human Nature; nor is it to be managed in such a Manner, as to lead others into Sin; but it is to be improved unto all kind and brotherly Affection and friendly Offices in serving one another, by all proper Means, as those that are bound to seek each other's Edification and Advantage.

14 *For all the Law is fulfilled in one Word,* even *in this; Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself.*

14. For all the Precepts of the second Table of the moral Law are summ'd up by our Lord himself (*Matt.* xxii. 39, 40.) in *one* so very comprehensive, that a due Regard to it, from a Principle of Love to God, would readily lead you to a Compliance with all the rest; and that is this, Your benevolent Temper and beneficent Behaviour toward your Fellow-creatures, and much more Fellow-christians, of every civil or religious Character, shall be sincerely such as you owe to yourself, and as, were you in their Circumstances, and they in yours, you would think reasonable for them to exercise toward yourself, as Partaker of the same human Nature, and especially as being of the same Christian-community with them.

15 *But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.*

15. But if, in Defiance of this great Commandment of the Law, ye like ravenous wild Beasts, rather than Christians, or rational Creatures, endued with Sentiments of Humanity, fight and quarrel, reproach and abuse each other with as much Severity and Fierceness, as if ye would bite and tear, and eat up one another, there is great Reason to fear, lest at length the God of Love and Peace forsake you, and ye on both Sides, through mutual Heats and Feuds, be brought to utter Ruin, with Relation to your Church-state and Privileges, and all your best Interests.

16 This *I say then, Walk in the Spirit,*

16. My Advice then; yea, my solemn Charge in the Name of the Lord Jesus, for preventing these and all other dread-

and ye shall not fulfil the Lust of the Flesh.

dreadful Eruptions of the Body of Sin, is, that ye labour, and beg of God to enable you, to live and act in the constant Course of your Walk with him and Conversation in the World, according to the Dictates, and under the Influence and Government of his good Spirit, and of that supernatural Principle of Grace and Holiness, which, I trust, he has planted in many of your Hearts, and which therefore may be also call'd *Spirit: (John* iii. 6) And this will have such a powerful Effect upon you, that ye will not yield yourselves up to the Inclinations and Propensions of that carnal Principle, which still in Measure abides with you, and may well be called *Flesh*; much less will ye ever be suffer'd to finish Sin, (ου μη τελεσητε) in such a Manner as would bring forth Death. *(Jam.* i. 15.)

17 *For the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh: And these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the Things that ye would.*

17. For in regenerate Souls, the Remainder of in-dwelling Corruption struggles against, and fain would suppress the gracious Principle and all its holy Workings in them, and expel the Spirit of God from them: And, on the contrary, the spiritual Principle that is wrought in them by the Holy Ghost, and sides with him, as living and acting under his Conduct and Assistance, heartily desires (επιθυμει) and labours after the Mortification and entire Destruction of the Body of Sin: And these two Principles, the Old and New Man, the Law of the Members and the Law of the Mind, are directly opposite in their Nature, Tendencies and Actings, one against the other; insomuch that, thro' the prevailing Biass of the better Part in you, ye do by no Means give into a chosen and deliberate Commission of those Sins, which your remaining Corruptions would prompt you to, any more than that, thro' their Counter-workings, ye * do not perform the Duties ye are call'd to, with such an intire Freedom, Constancy and Fervor, as ye ought and gladly would.

18 *But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the Law.*

18. But if, upon the whole, ye be under the Guidance and Influence of the Spirit of God, according to the Rule of his Word, and the Principle of that new Nature which he has given you; and so, in the habitual Frame of your Hearts and Course of your Lives, are led off from the Ways of Sin into the Paths of Righteousness, it is evident that ye are not under the Law, as a Covenant of Works, nor under its Curse; for *ye received not the Spirit by the Works of the Law, but by the Hearing of Faith*; (Ch. iii. 2) and *there is now no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh but after the Spirit.* (Rom. viii. 1.)

19 *Now the Works of the Flesh are mani-*

19, 20, 21. Now, if ye would know what are the different Operations of these two contrary Principles: As to the

* The strict and proper Sense of these Words (ου ποιητε) is, *ye do not*; and I see no Reason why they should not be so render'd.

evil

fest, which are these, *Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanness, Lasciviousness,*

20 *Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Heresies,*

21 *Envyings, Murders, Drunkenness, Revellings, and such like: Of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in Time past, that they which do such Things, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.*

evil Workings that are produced by the Corruption of Nature, some of which may be called the *Filthiness of the Flesh*, as they most immediately defile *the Body*; and others, the *Filthiness of the Spirit* *, as they most immediately defile the *Soul*, (2 *Cor.* vii. 1.) They are too obvious and odious to be concealed, or admit of any Colourings to recommend them, and are such as these, Whoredom in Thought or Deed, or both, between married Men and Women, or at least where one of the Parties is so; simple Fornication between single Persons; Impurity, or Lewdness, and Immodesty of every Kind; an unchaste, indecent and wanton Temper and Behaviour; all idolatrous Worship; Enchantments, Divinations and magic Arts by real or pretended Converses with familiar Spirits; Ill-will towards others, together with Enmity against God and Godliness; litigious Contentions; bitter Zeal and Rancour; a swelling revengeful Temper; Scoldings, Wranglings and Provocations to Evil; a riotous turbulent Behaviour to cause Dissentions; fundamental Errors, obstinately persisted in against the plainest Light and Evidence; uneasy Grudgings at the Prosperity of others; maliciously designing, and wilfully accomplishing the Death of Men without any just Cause; drinking strong Liquors to Excess; gluttenous Feastings, ranting and raving; together with many other Debaucheries, Lusts and Passions of a like Nature, concerning which I now assure you before-hand, as I also did when I was personally present and preached among you †, that they, who commit any of these Crimes, allowing themselves therein, and are not brought to Repentance, and recovered from them, shall not be admitted to the Inheritance of the Saints in God's heavenly Kingdom.

22 *But the Fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith,*

22, 23, But, in Opposition to these and such Sort of detestable Works of the Flesh, the Effects that are produced by the Holy Spirit, and by the Principle of divine Life under his Influence, and that, like the most grateful Fruits, are well pleasing to God through Jesus Christ, and profitable to yourselves, are such as these, A universal Love to God and Christ, his Word and Ordinances, Fellow-christians and Fellow-creatures, by which I have told you (*v.* 6.) Faith works, and proves itself to be sincere; *Joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we receive the Atonement*, (Rom. v. 11.) and rejoicing in the Happiness of others, and in contributing towards it; Peace

† Some of the *Works*, hereafter mention'd, arise principally, if not entirely from the *Mind*, such as *Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Wrath, Heresies* and *Envyings*; and yet are called *the Works of the Flesh*. We have therefore Reason to conclude, that by *the Flesh* the Apostle don't here mean the *Body* and its sensitive Appetites and Inclinations *only*, but *the Corruption* of human Nature as it spreads through and defiles all the Powers of the Soul, as well as all the Members of the Body, by which it discovers itself, and breaks out into Overtacts. (See the Notes on *Rom.* vi. 13, 19.)

* These are such *Works of the Flesh*, as seem to have much abounded among the *Galatians*, and therefore are so particularly specified.

of Conſcience under a Senſe of Peace with God through the Blood of Jeſus, and a peaceable Temper and Behaviour towards our Chriſtian-brethren, and towards all Men; a patient Bearing of Affronts and Injuries, and long Forbearance toward thoſe that offend us; an affable and courteous, harmleſs, ſweet and winning Diſpoſition and Carriage towards all we have to do with; a benevolent Temper and beneficent Courſe of Life; Fidelity to all the Truſts committed to us, as alſo in our Words and Promiſes, and in all our Dealings with regard to God and Man, as ſpringing from Faith in Chriſt and in God through him;

23 *Meekneſs, Temperance: Againſt ſuch there is no Law.*

a meek and humble, calm and quiet Frame of Spirit, diffuſing itſelf, in Imitation of our bleſſed Lord, through our whole Converſation in the World; and a regular Government of our Paſſions and Appetites, that we may not go into any Exceſs in the Purſuit and Uſe of earthly Enjoyments. Againſt ſuch Chriſtians, as are poſſeſſed of theſe and the like Fruits of the Spirit, there is no Law in Force to condemn them; becauſe, as has been obſerved, (*v.* 18.) theſe are the Perſons, that are not under the Law to be dealt with according to its ſtrict Tenor, and ſubjected to its Curſe.

24 *And they that are Chriſt's, have crucified the Fleſh, with the Affections and Luſts.*

24. And they that belong to Chriſt, not only in Name and Profeſſion, but in Truth, as his peculiar Property and Charge, and as Members of his myſtical Body vitally united to him, intereſted in him, and devoted to him, are obliged, earneſtly endeavour, and have been actually enabled by his Spirit, in Virtue of his Crucifixion, and in Conformity to him therein, to ſubdue the Power of the old Man, the Body of Sin, or the Corruption of human Nature, that it may not reign in their mortal Bodies; (*Rom.* vi. 6, 12.) and to break the Force of its grievous and defiling Paſſions, ſuch as *Hatred*, *Wrath* and *Envy*; and of its eager Deſires after ſenſual Pleaſure, ſuch as *Drunkenneſs* and *Uncleanneſs*, together with all the other Works of the Fleſh, and ungovernable Propenſions toward them, before-mentioned, (*v.* 19—21) that they, like a crucified Man, may be continually loſing Strength, and gradually lingering more and more till they quite expire.

25 *If we live in the Spirit, let us alſo walk in the Spirit.*

25. If we are indeed quickned and made alive to God by the Power of the Divine Spirit, Let it be our daily Prayer, Labour and Concern to act up to our Principles, Characters, Obligations and Advantages as Chriſtians, by departing from all Iniquity, and walking in all holy Converſation and Godlineſs, according to the gracious Suggeſtions and Aſſiſtances he affords us.

26 *Let us not be deſirous of Vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another.*

26. And as we are indebted to him for all the Good that is in us, Let none of us over-rate our own Endowments or Performances, as though we were in ourſelves more worthy than others; nor aim at making a vain-glorious Shew of them, as thoſe that ſeek the Applauſe of Men,

and despise others on Account of their lower Attainments: Let us not, in Violation of the great Law of Love, (*v.* 14.) provoke one another to angry Resentments; nor give Occasion of stirring up envious Passions in one against another, on Account of his superior Advantages of any Kind.

RECOLLECTIONS.

Behold the Danger of turning aside from the true Gospel-Doctrine of Justification alone by the free Grace of God through Faith in Christ, and seeking it by the Works of the Law! This is to lose all Benefit by Christ, and to be obliged to keep the whole Law, as the Condition of Life, which we never can fulfil. How unhappy is it, that any who seem'd to set out well in the Christian-Faith and Profession, should, instead of standing fast in a Gospel-Freedom from *Jewish* Ceremonies, and from the Curse of the Law, subject themselves to both! The Doctrine of a crucified Christ, and Salvation alone by him, is what we must adhere to amidst all Reproaches and Persecutions on that Account; and they who would introduce pernicious Errors, in Opposition to it, are such Troublers of the Church, as ought to be cut off from its Communion. And, Ah! how great is the Punishment due to their Sin, which sooner or later they must bear; unless God grant them Repentance to the Acknowledgment of the Truth! But Believers, who are made alive to God by his Spirit, and walk under his Conduct and Influence, wait with earnest Desire and Expectation of Eternal Life (the great Object of their Hope) on the Foot of the Righteousness of Christ, thro' such a Faith in him, as works by Love. How happy is their State! Neither Circumcision nor Uncircumcision, as consider'd merely in themselves, can any way affect it; nor is there any Sentence of Law-Condemnation in Force against them, they not being under its Covenant. But as they are still under the commanding Power of the moral Law, as a Rule of Life, how carefully should they guard against turning their holy Liberty into an Occasion of Licentiousness! And with what Benevolence should they serve one another in every Work of Love, which summarily includes all the Duties we owe to our Neighbour! But if any, under a Pretence of Zeal for Truth and Holiness, fall into intemperate Heats and Quarrels one with another, let them remember what a desperate Risk they run of ruining themselves and the Cause of Religion together. Would we be preserv'd from gratifying these and all other corrupt Dispositions, that still too much remain and oppose the Principle of Grace, in regenerate Souls? Let it be our daily Prayer, and Endeavour to walk under the Light and Influence of the Holy Spirit, whose blessed Fruits lie in direct Opposition to all the Works of the Flesh, any of which, being indulged and persisted in, will certainly exclude a Man from the Kingdom of Heaven. But they that are indeed united to Christ, thro' Faith in him, have gain'd such a Victory over the Corruption of Nature, and all its evil Motions and Appetites, that, like a crucified Man, it is ready to expire in them. And if we have any good Hope that, thro' the Spirit's Operations, this is our Case, how highly doth it become us to take heed of assuming Honour to ourselves, or vaunting of our Attainments; and so provoking some to Wrath, as being despised; and others to Envy, as being out-shone by us!

CHAP. VI.

The Apostle proceeds in Exhortations to Meekness, Gentleness and Humility, 1—5. *To a generous Maintenance of Ministers, and Beneficence towards all Men, but especially toward professing Believers,* 6—10. *Sums up the main Design of his Epistle, for guarding the* Galatians *against their* Judaizing *Teachers that wanted them to be circumcised for selfish Ends, directly con-*

contrary to his own in preaching a crucified Chriſt, 11—17. *And concludes with a ſolemn Benediction*, 18.

TEXT.

1 *BRethren, if a Man be overtaken in a Fault, ye which are ſpiritual, reſtore ſuch an one in the Spirit of Meekneſs; conſidering thyſelf, leſt thou alſo be tempted.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. ACcording to the Rule of Chriſtian-charity, which I have laid down, (*Chap.* v. 13, 14, 15, 22, *&c.*) If any one among you, my Brethren, fall into an erronious Notion or immoral Act, like one catch'd by Surprize before he was aware, (προληφθῃ) through Unwatchfulneſs, Ignorance, human Frailty, plauſible Inſinuations, the Examample of others, or the Power of Temptation, I beſeech thoſe of you that are more advanced and confirmed in Knowledge and Grace, (See the Note on 1 *Cor.* ii. 15.) to do your utmoſt to reduce ſuch an one, like a diſlocated Member, (καταρτιζετε) to his proper Place in the Body of Chriſt, by informing his Judgment, and dealing cloſely with his Conſcience, for bringing him to Repentance; not in a rough and angry Way of treating him, but with ſuch Meekneſs and Patience, Tenderneſs and Compaſſion in your Temper and Behaviour, as may convince him that what ye do to reclaim him proceeds, not from Paſſion or Prejudice, but merely from an affectionate Concern for the Glory of God, and the Good of his own Soul: And to induce every one of you hereunto, reflect ſeriouſly on your own Infirmities, while you dwell in mortal Fleſh, and carry a Body of Sin about with you; and conſider the Danger you are in, leſt, while you are too ſevere upon others, God ſhould leave you to fall by Temptation into the like, or ſome other Evil, as bad, or worſe.

2 *Bear ye one another's Burdens, and ſo fulfil the Law of Chriſt.*

2. In this Manner, inſtead of impoſing heavy Yokes on one Hand, or refuſing any Offices of Kindneſs on the other, ſee to it that ye ſympathize and bear with, pray for and aſſiſt each other, eſpecially when any are troubled in Spirit for what they have done amiſs; and endeavour to *ſupport the Weak*, (1 Theſ. v. 14) to lighten and relieve one anothers Loads and Grievances, Trials and Exerciſes of every Kind; and ſo put that excellent Law of Love into Practice, which has been already mention'd, (*Chap.* v. 14) and which our Lord himſelf has recommended, as ſummarily compreoending all the Duties of the ſecond Table of the Law, (*Matth.* xxii. 39, 40.)

3 *For if a Man think himſelf to be ſomething when he is nothing, he deceiveth himſelf.*

3. For if any one hath high Thoughts of his own Attainments, as though he were ſufficient of himſelf to reſiſt Temptation, and do great Things in Religion; and ſo deſpiſes and inſults others, while at the ſame Time he is really deſtitute of what he pretends to, he dreadfully deceives his own Soul.

4 *But let every Man prove his own Work, and then ſhall*

4. But that none may be forward to judge and cenſure others, nor be ſadly miſtaken about himſelf, let every one narrowly ſearch into, try and prove his own Principles, Mo-

he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

tives and Ends, Temper and Behaviour, that he may form a right Judgment concerning them; and if, upon serious Examination, they appear to be according to the Truth of the Gospel, and his holy Profession of it, he then will have great Matter of Rejoicing, even unto a humble Glorying, (καυχημα) not in taking any Honour to himself, but within his own Soul, on Account of what God has wrought in him, and enabled him to do; and, on Account of the Witness, which his own Conscience and the Holy Spirit bear to his Sincerity, and to God's approving and accepting him and his Services, thro' Jesus Christ. And having this delightful Consciousness in himself, he need not be solicitous about the good Opinion and Applause of others, or about glorying in them as his Proselytes; nor doth his Happiness at all depend upon what he is in a mere Comparison of himself with others of a worse Character, or upon what Esteem they have of him; since *he who judges him is the Lord.* (1 *Cor.* iv. 3, 4.)

5 *For every Man shall bear his own Burden.*

5. For as *every one must give an Account of himself to God*; (*Rom.* xiv. 12) so he will be judged and dealt with for Happiness, or Misery, in that awful Day, not according to what he is in Comparison with, or in the Opinion of others, nor according to any over-weening Thoughts of his own concerning himself; but only according to what he really is, and shall then be found to be in Heart and Life, before God.

6 *Let him that is taught in the Word, communicate unto him that teacheth, in all good Things.*

6. In order to your being acquainted with, and establish'd in these important Things, there is need of a standing Ministry; and as it is equitable in itself, and the Lord Jesus has ordain'd, that *they, who preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel,* (1 Cor. ix. 14.) let no Differences among you prevent your supporting his faithful Servants in their Work; but let him that has the Benefit of being taught the Truth, as it is in Jesus, and especially him that has been effectually taught of God by this Means, contribute cheerfully and liberally, according to his worldly Substance, to the comfortable Maintenance of the Minister, that spends his Time and Pains in preaching the Gospel to him, which brings better Blessings than all the good Things of this Life.

7 *Be not deceived: God is not mocked: For whatsoever a Man soweth, that shall he also reap.*

7 Let none of you be deluded or misled by any plausible Suggestions, or by your own covetous Tempers, as if this, or any other Instances of Liberality, as Occasions require, were not your Duty. How much soever a Man may prevaricate, to the deceiving of himself, or others, the great God, who sees your Hearts, and has a supreme Right to your Obedience, will not suffer himself to be imposed upon, or treated with a Contempt or Neglect of any of his Commandments, under fallacious Pretences of obeying them: For, to speak in the Language of a Metaphor, taken from the ordinary Course of Providence in the Works of Nature, a Man's Reaping shall be according to the Goodness or Badness of what he sowes.

8. For

8 *For he that soweth to his Flesh, shall of the Flesh reap Corruption: But he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap Life everlasting.*

8. For as in the natural World, the Husbandman reaps the Fruits of the Earth, according to the different Kinds of Seed he has sown; so in the moral and spiritual World, every Man will receive the Fruit of his Doings, answerable to their Nature and Quality; insomuch that he who, like a Sower of bad Seed, lays out his temporal Enjoyments, or spends his Time and Strength, with selfish and corrupt Views, shall reap the sad and rotten Fruit of such a carnal Temper and Conduct, in only perishing Acquisitions here, and endless Destruction hereafter: But, on the contrary, he who, thro' the Power of divine Grace, employs his earthly Substance, and improves his various Talents, like a Sower of good Seed, for promoting spiritual Things, in Subservience to the Work and Design of the Spirit of God, agreeable to his holy Nature and Will, as revealed in his Word, shall reap glorious Fruit unto Holiness in this World, the *End* of which shall be *eternal Life* in the next, as *the Gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.* (Rom. vi. 22, 23.)

9 *And let us not be weary in well-doing: For in due Season we shall reap, if we faint not.*

9. Being animated by this comfortable View and Prospect, Let us take Heed that, like People weary of their Enterprizes, we don't grow remiss and negligent about, much less cease from, doing Good to others by any Means that we may be capable of: For we shall certainly have a plentiful Harvest of Blessings in proper Time, if not in this World, yet at the Resurrection of the Just, in case we do not, through Unbelief and Discouragement, Covetousness and Impatience, or some other evil Principle, desist from our Duty, as counting it an irksome Task; but persevere in it to the End.

10 *As we have therefore Opportunity, let us do Good unto all* Men, *especially unto them who are of the Houshold of Faith.*

10. While therefore God, by his Providence, gives us Abilities, and proper Opportunities and Occasions, Let us labour and exercise ourselves (ἐργαζώμεθα) in every Work of Beneficence towards the necessitous, and all our Fellow-creatures, without restraining it, like the *Jews*, to those of our own Religion and Nation; and yet this ought to be done most especially, with Care and Delight, to those, who in the Judgment of Charity have cordially embraced the Faith of Christ, and are brought into his Church and Family, as his Domesticks and Children of his Houshold, (*Eph.* ii. 19.)

11 *Ye see how large a Letter I have written unto you with mine own Hand.*

11. Now, to draw to a Close, Ye see, and pray observe, my Brethren, what important Things I have wrote; and to how great a Length, in my abundant Zeal and Concern for you, I have stretched this Letter, and *that* not by the Assistance of an *Amanuensis*, which I mostly make Use of, but all of it with mine own Hand-writing *.

12. As

* The Verb (ἴδετε) *ye see* may be render'd in the *imperative* as well as *indicative* Mood. And *how large a Letter I have wrote* (πηλίκοις γράμμασιν ἔγραψα) may probably signify not only *the Length* of the Epistle,

12 As many as desire to make a fair Shew in the Flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer Persecution for the Cross of Christ.

12. As to all those that would pervert you, whatever their Figure and Pretences be, or how much soever they be ambitious of recommending themselves to the Favour of Men, by external flourishing Professions of Religion, and zealous Observations of ceremonial Rites and carnal Ordinances, which sanctify only to the purifying of the Flesh, (*Heb.* ix. 13.) their chief and governing End in so strenuously insisting on the Necessity of your being circumcised, (though many of you never were under the *Mosaic* Law) is not out of any Love to you, or Concern for your Salvation; but only that they themselves may escape the Persecutions and Reproaches, which the furious unbelieving *Jews* would bring upon them, were they to hold, that Faith in a crucified Saviour is sufficient for Justification, without joining to it an Observation of the Law of *Moses*, (See the Preface to this Epistle, and the Note on *Chap.* iv. 11.)

13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the Law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your Flesh.

13. For these very Zealots that have been circumcised, and thereby, in Effect, obliged to keep the Whole of the *Mosaic* Law, as ever they would be justified by it; (*Chap.* v. 3.) even they themselves don't come up to its high Demands of moral Duties *, how strict and zealous soever they may be for observing its ceremonial Rites and Ordinances; nor indeed are they so much concerned about the first, as about the last: But they would fain have you brought under the Bond of Circumcision, that they may boast of you as their Proselytes from among the *Gentiles*; and so make a Merit with the carnal *Jews* of your being circumcised in the Flesh through their Instigation, and thereby obliged to observe the Law in its full Extent for Justification to eternal Life.

14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the World

14. But, as to myself, far be it from me, 'tis a detestable Thought in my Account, that I, like them, should be ambitious of human Applause, or boast of what I have done, or rely on any Thing as the Ground of Acceptance with God, except it be on the atoning Sacrifice of our cruci-

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Epistle, but likewise *the important Matter* contain'd in it. (See Mr. *Pyle*'s Note on the Place.) However, the Apostle mentions his writing it *with his own Hand* to shew his zealous Concern for them; because, as seems from *Rom.* xvi. 22. 1 *Cor.* xvi. 21, and 2 *Thess.* iii. 17, he usually either dictated his Epistles, and some other Person wrote them; or, if he wrote the Originals, others transcribed them, and then he sent the Copies to the Churches, attested by his own Hand to be genuine. (See the Note on *Rom.* xvi. 22.)

† These Judaizing Christians were zealous for Circumcision and all other ceremonial Ordinances; and therefore when the Apostle says, that *they themselves did not keep the Law*, he seems to have his Eye principally on the *moral Law*, in Obedience to which they were sadly defective, and yet were undoubtedly as much obliged by Circumcision to attend to, as they could be to external Rites and Ceremonies, if they would pretend to be justified by the Works of the Law: And as he mentions this by way of Censure upon those Zealots, for not sincerely acting up to their own Pretences, it seems too jejune to suppose, with some, that their *not keeping the Law* only means that they, being in *Galatia*, could not regularly observe the *Jewish* Feasts, or offer Sacrifice, or cleanse themselves from their Defilements by touching any thing that was unclean.

is crucified unto me, and I unto the World.

cifid Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for whom I am willing to *suffer the Loss of all Things*, &c. (*Phil.* iii. 8, 9.) Such is my intire Dependence on this, my Triumph in it, and Expectation from it, that by Faith in him, and by Virtue derived from him, and in Conformity to him, as crucified, I am dead to all the Allurements, Interests, Ease, and Honours of this World on one Hand, and all its Terrors, Persecutions and Reproaches on the other, so as not to be moved by them: (*Acts* xx. 24.) And it is on Account of my preaching the pure Doctrine of Salvation alone by the Cross of Christ, without any Mixture of the Works of the Law, that Men of a worldly Spirit, who are chiefly governed by secular Interests, are dead in their Affections toward me, despise and hate me, and would be glad to crucify me, as they did my dear Redeemer.

15 *For in Christ Jesus neither Circumcision availeth any Thing, nor Uncircumcision, but a new Creature.*

15. For with Regard to Union with Christ, and Justification to Life, through Faith in him, a Man's being circumcised, or not circumcised, considering these Things barely in themselves, is of no Manner of Account, as all Distinctions of that Kind under the New Testament-dispensation are at an End. The great Thing that belongs to and is necessary for proving our Interest in him is, that we be indeed *created in Christ Jesus unto good Works*; (Eph. ii. 10.) or be formed a-new in our Principles, Temper and Designs; and so brought to deal with God for all Acceptance, and to walk in all Holiness before him, according to the Tenor of the Gospel, in an Exercise of that *Faith, which works by Love*, (Chap. v 6.)

16 *And as many as walk according to this Rule, Peace be on them, and Mercy, and upon the Israel of God.*

16. And as many professing Christians, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, as shall walk orderly, (στοιχησουσι) and within the Boundaries of the Rule, which has been laid down in this Epistle, with respect to the Grounds of Acceptance with God, the right Use of Christian-liberty, the Law of Love, and the new Creature, without any Regard to Circumcision or Uncircumcision, I earnestly pray with assured Confidence, that all the Blessings of Peace with God, with one another, and in their own Consciences, and all the Kindness and tender Compassion, that wretched sinful Creatures stand in Need of, even every good Thing, that can be included in *Peace* and *Mercy*, may be richly bestowed by the God of all Grace upon them, and upon all sincere Believers; and I authoritatively pronounce all these Blessings upon them, who, in Distinction from *Israelites* only after the Flesh, are the true and spiritual *Israel*, which God has formed for himself, and receives and owns for his peculiar Church and People, through his Son.

17 *From henceforth let no Man trouble me: For I bear in my Body the Marks of the Lord Jesus.*

17. Upon the Whole then, after all that has been said in this Epistle, let no one give me any further Trouble, by Disputes and Quarrels about Circumcision and other Observances of the Law, or by injuriously reproaching me, as tho' I had sometimes preached them up as necessary Things:

For

For many are the Persecutions which I have already endured; and to this very Day I carry about in my mortal Body the visible Scars of those Stripes, Wounds and Bonds, (*Acts* xx. 23, and 2*Cor*. iv. 10, and xi. 23, 24.) which I have suffer'd for the sake of, and in Conformity to my crucified Lord and Saviour, as evident Marks of my being his devoted Servant, and Proofs of my faithful Adherence to, and Zeal for promoting the pure Gospel-Doctrine of Justification alone thro' Faith in him.

18 *Brethren, the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ* be *with your Spirit. Amen.*

18. To conclude, Brethren, my Heart's Desire and Prayer to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is, that his free Love and Favour, together with all its blessed Manifestations, Fruits and Effects, may plentifully abound toward you, and sensibly rest upon your Souls, to lead you in the Way of Faith, Comfort and Holiness, till ye shall arrive at the complete Possession of everlasting Life. In Testimony of my Sincerity herein, and of my Hope with Respect hereunto, I cordially say, *Amen.*

RECOLLECTIONS.

With what Meekness and Humility, Compassion and Sympathy, should Christians of superior Attainments labour to recover their Brethren, that have been overtaken with a Fault through Infirmity and Temptation! To induce them to this, let them consider that, in the present State of human Frailty, they themselves are liable to Slips and Falls; and that though they be deliver'd from the ceremonial Law, and from the Covenant of Works and its Curse, they are still under the moral Law to Christ, who enjoins all Obedience to it, and every Office of Love one towards another. How dreadful is it to deceive one's own Soul, thro' Self-conceit, or hypocritical Mockeries of God, who neither will nor can be imposed upon! But what a noble Pleasure has a Man in himself when, upon close Trial, his Conscience bears him Witness, that he is approved of God in Christ; and is enabled to prove his own Faithfulness in the Management of his worldly Enjoyments for supporting a Gospel-ministry, and doing Good, as Opportunities offer, to all Men, and especially those that belong to the Houshold of Faith! And O how solemn is the Thought, that in the Judgment of the great Day every one must reap the Fruit of his own Ways, whether of Sin unto Death, or of Holiness unto everlasting Life! What signifies making a fair Show of Religion, in outward Appearances, if our Hearts and Ends are wrong, and we are so fond of the Favour and Applause of Men, as to be afraid or asham'd to own a crucified Christ, and the Doctrine of Salvation alone by him, lest we should suffer Reproaches and Persecutions on that Account? But they are Christians indeed, and ought not to be suspected to be otherwise, who can glory in the Cross of Christ, as the only Ground of all Acceptance with God, and who by Virtue derived from him are as dead to the World, as the Men of this World can be to them. Whatever be our Professions, Denominations and external Privileges, nothing will turn to our saving Advantage, unless we be new Creatures, and have that Faith which works by Love. But Grace, Mercy and Peace will be upon all *Israelites* indeed, who walk by Rule, according to the Gospel, in their Dealings with God and Man. The Lord Jesus himself will freely bless them; and his Servants can't but heartily wish that they may be abundantly blessed, and in hope of it say, *Amen.*

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF THE APOSTLE *PAUL*'s EPISTLE to the *EPHESIANS*.

In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The Preface to the EPISTLE to the *EPHESIANS*.

EPHESUS was the Metropolis of the Proconsular *Asia*, which was a Part of the Province that went by the Name of *Asia the Less*. Here stood the celebrated Temple of *Diana*, which was called one of the seven Wonders of the World; and the Inhabitants of this City were on the one hand eminent for human Wisdom and Learning, and on the other remarkably infamous for Idolatry, Lasciviousness and magical Arts, as appears from *Chap*. v. 5. and *Acts* xix. 19. And yet from among Persons of these Characters, sovereign Grace raised a Church, the greatest Part of which were *Gentiles*, by the Ministry of the Apostle *Paul*, who continued preaching to them about *three Years*, *Acts* xx. 31.

Some Time afterwards he took a Journey that Way, and sent for the Elders of this Church to *Miletus*, where, among other Things, he appealed to them, that he had diligently and affectionately laboured among them, and *kept back nothing that was profitable to them*; *but had testified both to the* Jews *and Greeks Repentance toward God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ*; *and had not shunned to declare unto them the whole Counsel of God*: He then charged them to *take Heed to the Flock, over which the Holy Ghost had made them Overseers*, telling them by the Spirit of Prophecy, that *grievous Wolves would enter in among them not sparing the Flock*, and that *of their ownselves many would arise, speaking perverse Things to draw away Disciples after them*, &c. Acts xx. 17—30. And the Account we have of this Church, *Rev*. ii. 1—6, shews how sadly this Prediction was verified.

To guard them therefore against those Seducers, which, perhaps, by this Time began to appear amongst them; and to confirm them in the Faith, which he had preached and they had received, he wrote this Epistle, in which he gave them an *Epitome* of that Gospel, which he had preached to them more at large, with respect to the important Doctrine of God's free Love and Grace, particularly in Election and effectual Calling, which he illustrates and inhances from a Con[illegible]

ration of what they were by Nature before Conversion, and of the glorious Blessings, which they were made Partakers of through the Gospel; *Chap.* i, ii, iii. These contain the *Doctrinal* Part of the Epistle, which he delivers in sublime, moving and rapturous Strains, like one whose Heart was deeply impressed and delighted, and almost overcome with the great Things he was speaking of; and then, according to his usual Method, he proceeds in the three last Chapters to the *Practical* Part, in which he exhorts them to various Duties, civil and religious, personal and relative, suitable to their Christian-character, Privileges, Assistances and Obligations.

Dr. *Mills*, in his *Prolegomena* to the New Testament, P. 9. and some others both before and after him suppose, that this Epistle was written to the *Laodiceans*, and that the Apostle ordered a Copy of it to be sent to the *Ephesian*-church, and so it came to be very early called the Epistle to the Saints at *Ephesus*; others suppose that it was a Sort of general Epistle for the Use of such *Gentile*-christians, especially those of *Asia*, of whose Conversion the Apostle had only heard. But as the principal Doctrines of this Epistle agree with the Account he gave the *Elders* of *Ephesus* of what he had preached to them, and suit the Design of fortifying them against the Errors he fore-told would spring up among them; *Acts* xx. 20—29, (See Dr. *Whitby*'s Preface, and Dr. *Goodwin*'s Premise concerning this Epistle, P. 3.) and as all the antient Copies and Versions, that are come to our Hand, read at *Ephesus*, and none of them at *Laodicea*, the laboured Arguments of these learned Gentlemen seem not to be fully conclusive; and the Passages in the Epistle itself, on which they are founded, will be considered, as they occur in the Course of the Exposition: However, the Epistle might be wrote to *Ephesus*, not only for the immediate Use of the Church there, but likewise of other Churches in *Asia*, of which *Laodicea* was one; accordingly some have thought that they are included in the latter Part of the Inscription, which is indefinitely *to the faithful in Christ Jesus:* Chap. i. 1. And if it was written with a particular View to the *Laodiceans*, as well as the *Ephesians*, it might possibly be sometimes called the Epistle to the *Laodiceans*, as some suppose it is, *Col.* iv. 16. (See the Note there.) But as this is a Matter of little or no Moment, we may be very easy about it, since it is agreed, on all Hands, that it was wrote by the inspired Apostle *Paul*, and is of equal Use to us, whether it was written immediately to the *Ephesians*, or any other Church.

As to the *Time* when this Epistle was wrote, it is concluded to be, as some think, about the Year of our Lord 58 or 59, or as others 62. However, it is certain that this and the Epistle to the *Colossians* are a Sort of Twin Epistles, as they were dictated or wrote about the same Time, and on much the same Subjects, and so cast Light one upon the other; and both were wrote when the Apostle was a Prisoner at *Rome*: For in this Epistle, *Chap.* iii. 1, and iv. 1, he calls himself *the Prisoner of Christ Jesus*, and *the Prisoner of the Lord*; and in that to the *Colossians*, Chap. iv. 18. he speaks of himself as *in Bonds*. Accordingly it has been observed, that what he wrote in those Circumstances had the greatest Relish and Savour of the Things of God, which eminently appears in these two Epistles, and in that to the *Philippians*, which was also wrote in Prison, and about the same Time.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

The Apostle prefaces his Epistle, as usual, with an Inscription and Salutation, ver. 1, 2. *Gives a general Account of Saving Blessings in a Way of Thanksgiving and Praise,* 3. *Enlarges upon them, as prepared in God's eternal Election, as purchased by Christ's Blood, and as convey'd in effectual Calling,* 4—10. *Applies all this, first to the believing* Jews, *and then to the believing* Gentiles, 11—14. *Thanks God for what he had heard of their Faith and Love, and prays for the Continuance of their Knowledge and Hope, with respect to the heavenly Inheritance, and to God's powerful Working in them, answerable to what had been wrought in the Resurrection and Exaltation of Christ,* 15—23.

TEXT.

1 PAUL *an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the Will of God, to the Saints which are at Ephesus, and to the Faithful in Christ Jesus.*

2 *Grace* be *to you, and Peace from God our Father, and* from *the Lord Jesus Christ.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. I *PAUL* who have the Honour of being an Apostle of Jesus Christ, (see the Note on *Rom.* i. 1.) immediately sent forth, authorized and qualified by him, to publish his glorious Gospel, and am called to this important Office according to the sovereign Will of God, who of his own mere Favour appointed me to it, I, in the Execution of this high Trust, send this Epistle under divine Inspiration * to those Christians at *Ephesus*, who, as Members of the Church there, are by Profession, and, as I trust, really renew'd and sanctify'd by the holy Spirit; and to those Believers there, or elsewhere, that have obtain'd Mercy to be faithful to their Light and Obligations, in their Adherence to the Truth as it is in Jesus, and by Virtue of their Union with him, the only Saviour, from whom all their Faith and Faithfulness is derived, and in whom 'tis acceptable to God.

2. May all the Riches of divine *Grace*, as consisting of the free Favour of God (see the Note *Rom.* i. 7.) and all its happy Fruits, Manifestations and Effects, which may be summ'd up in *Peace* with him, with one another, and in your own Souls, and is the Peace that passeth all Under-

* *And to the Faithful* (καὶ πιστοῖς without the Article) might be translated *even* to the Faithful; for the Particle (καὶ) render'd *and*, frequently signifies *even* in the New Testament, when it comes between two Nouns, the first of which has the Article and the other not, as may be seen in many Instances, where 'tis sometimes translated *and*, at others *even*, as in *ver.* 3, *Rom.* xv. 6, 2 *Cor.* i. 3, and xi. 31, *Phil.* iv. 20, *Col.* ii. 2, 2 *Thess.* ii. 16, 1 *Peter* i. 3, and several other Places: And the Word here render'd *the Faithful* signifies also *Believing*, or *Believers*, or them *which believe*, and is often so translated, as in *John* xx. 27, *Acts* x. 45, 2 *Cor.* vi. 15, 1 *Tim.* iv. 3, 10, 12, and v. 16, and vi. 2; and so may intimate that Faith and Holiness go together, or that all true Believers are real Saints, or holy Persons: But some have thought that *and to the Faithful in Christ Jesus* is added by way of Intimation, that the Epistle was directed to the rest of the Believers in the lesser *Asia*, as well as to those at *Ephesus*; and whether this were the Apostle's immediate Intention, or not, he doubtless design'd it for their Use, and for the Use of all the Churches of Christ in succeeding Ages.

standing, (*Phil.* iv. 7.) May all this, together with every Kind of Prosperity, abound towards each and every one of you here, till it be compleated in eternal Felicity hereafter, from our Covenant-God and Father in Christ, as the Fountain and first moving Cause; and from our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ himself, as the Purchaser and Dispenser of all the Blessings, that are comprehended in the Peace, which he bequeathed to his Disciples when he was going to the Father. (*John* xiv. 27.)

3 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual Blessings in heavenly* Places *in Christ.*

3. All possible Honour and Glory, Thanksgiving and Praise are infinitely due, and are chearfully paid by me, and ought to be so by you, to the ever-blessed God *, whose most endearing Title formerly was *that* of the God of *Abraham* and *Isaac* and *Jacob*, but who has now revealed himself under the still more encouraging and delightful Character of God even the Father, in the highest and most peculiar Sense, of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, his only begotten and eternal Son, and the divine Mediator between him and us, who in the immense Riches of his Love and Grace to those of us, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, † that are

* God's *blessing us* is his *conferring all spiritual and heavenly Blessings upon us* in his *peculiar Love* to us, which distinguishes it from his bestowing only *spiritual Gifts and providential Bounties*, in a Way of *common Goodness*, which are not always Blessings to those that have them; but our *blessing God* is only paying our solemn, grateful and honourable Acknowledgments of him, and ascribing Glory to him, from the Affection we bear to him, and the Delight we have in him, on account of his own Blessedness, and of the Blessings which he confers upon us; and so our blessing him is not only distinguished from his blessing us, but likewise from those Praises that redound, or are offer'd to God, but don't proceed from Love to him as the Principle of them. Thus 'tis said *Ps.* cxlv. 10. that *all his Works praise him, and his Saints bless him*, because *they only* have such a Love to God, as gives them Pleasure in the Thoughts of his Glory, and in their Ascriptions of it to him. Here again the Particle *καὶ* (see the Note on *ver.* 1) may be taken *exegetically*, as signifying *even* the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if we consider these as distinct Characters, according to the View that our Lord himself gives of them, who order'd *Mary Magdalen* to say to his Brethren, *I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God*, John xx. 17. (See the Paraphrase there). The Matter is to be consider'd thus: The Father is Christ's *God* as *Man* and *Mediator*, and one *in Covenant* with him, who was his Hope and Strength in every Difficulty and Danger, and gave him his Reward; and he is his *Father primarily* with respect to his *divine Nature*, as *his only begotten Son*, and *secondarily* with respect to his *human Nature*, as that is *personally* united with *the divine*, and so comes into the Relation of a higher Sonship to the Father, than can belong to any mere Creature whatever.

† I can't see sufficient Reason to think with some Commentators, that *blessed us* ought to be intirely confin'd to the *Gentiles*, and *that* merely in a *national* Consideration of them: For the Apostle here and in several following Verses includes, together with *himself*, all those whom he had stiled *the Saints at* Ephesus, *and the Faithful in Christ Jesus*, and had saluted, as such, in the two immediately preceding Verses; and tho' the Church at *Ephesus* mostly consisted of *Gentile*-Believers, and the Grace of God to them is consider'd particularly and at large in several Parts of the Epistle; yet there were some of the *Jewish* Sort among them, as may be gather'd from *Acts* xviii. 19, 20, 24, *&c*; and this was commonly the Case of all the Churches of the Lesser *Asia*, and particularly of this Church, whether it were the Church at *Ephesus*, or not, as appears from *ver.* 12 of this Chapter, where the Apostle speaks of those among them, that *first trusted in Christ*, in Distinction from the *Gentile* Part of them; and *Chap.* ii. 16, 18, he mentions *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as being *both reconciled to God in one Body by the Cross of Christ*; and says, *through him we both have Access by one Spirit to the Father*; And surely, *We were by Nature the Children of Wrath, even as others*, (Ch. ii. 3) can never be meant merely of the *Gentiles*, since the only Doubt could be, whether the *Jews* were by Nature Children of Wrath, as well as *Gentiles*; and not whether the *Gentiles* were by Nature the Children of Wrath, as well as the *Jews*. And as the Apostle often *varies* the Person in this Epistle, sometimes speaking in the first Person plural *we*,

are *Saints and faithful in Christ Jesus*, (ver. 1) has freely and bountifully bestowed upon us, not only some, but all and all Manner of spiritual Blessings, that are heavenly in their Nature, Original and Tendency, and shall be compleated in the heavenly Mansions ‖. They are already enjoy'd in their Beginnings and Earnests by us, and are secured, and taken Possession of in Heaven for us, in and by Jesus Christ, as our Head and Saviour, and the only Purchaser of them, and grand Medium of their Conveyance to us.

4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the Foundation of the World, that we should be holy, and without Blame before him in Love.

4. All this took its Rise and was prepared in the eternal Counsel of God, wherein he eminently and in a distinguishing Manner blessed us by a free Grant of it all to us *; and 'tis brought to pass according to, and in Performance of his gracious and unchangeable Purpose, even as he of his own mere Love and Favour has made a Sovereign Choice of us in and together with Christ, as our great Head and Representative, who as such is stiled, by Way of Eminence, *the Elect*; (Is. xlii. 1.) which Choice was made before the *Foundation of the Earth was laid*, even from all Eternity: And this he has done, not because he foresaw that we would be holy, but that we might be so by a Work of renewing Grace begun here, and to be perfected hereafter, he having *chosen us to Salvation through Sanctification of the Spirit unto Obedience*, (2 Thess. ii. 13. and 1 Pet. i. 2.) and that our Holiness might not be in outward Appearance only, but in Sincerity and Truth; such as is without Hypocrisy and Deceit, and, at length, shall be intirely sinless, without Exception, in the Sight of God, who searcheth the Heart; and such as in great Measure consists of, as well as proceeds from, that Love unto God and one another, which works in us as under his all-seeing Eye, and inclines us to keep his Commandments without counting them grievous. And all this is the Fruit of his Love to us, who *hath saved us and called us with an holy Calling, not according to our Works, but according to his own Purpose and Grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the World began*. (2 Tim. i. 9.)

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and *us*; and at others in the second, *ye* and *you*; it will hardly be found that he ever uses the Pronoun *we* and *us* in any Passage, that could not belong to *himself* and the believing *Jews*; where *ye* and *you* frequently relate to Things peculiar to the *Gentiles*; though, some few Times, to Things that were common to both.

‖ The Words *in heavenly Places* (εν τοις επουρανιοις) signify *in the Heavenlies*, and so may relate either to *Places* or *Things*, in Opposition to the carnal Privileges of the *Jews*, and their Notions of earthly Blessings in the Messiah's Kingdom.

* God's *choosing us* may be consider'd, either as one Instance of all those spiritual Blessings wherewith he hath blessed us, or as a Model or Plat-form in his own eternal Mind, according to which he has blessed us with the other Blessings; For the Word (καθὼς) *as*, or *according as*, fairly admits of both those Senses; and the Apostle's saying this, inclusive of himself who was a *Jew*, shews that God's eternal Choice was not of *Gentiles* nationally consider'd, but was of *Persons* from among the *Jews*, as well as from among the *Gentiles*.

5. And

5 *Having predestinated us unto the Adoption of Children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good Pleasure of his Will,*

5. And God, in the same eternal Decree, whereby he graciously separated us from the rest of Mankind †, has foreordained us to the Dignity of Adoption into his Family, that we might be brought into the Relation of Sons and Heirs to God and joint Heirs with Christ; and so might have a Right to the heavenly Inheritance, and to all the Honours, Privileges and Blessings that belong to his Childred; some of which are to be enjoyed in this World, till they shall issue in all the Glories of our Adoption, that shall be consummated, both in Soul and Body, *at the Manifestation of the Sons of God*, in and for ever after their Resurrection from the Dead: (*Rom.* viii. 19, 23.) Which glorious Adoption is designed, and brought to pass, through our Union with Jesus Christ his eternal and only begotten Son, that we might be Brethren to him, and he might be glorified in and by us, as he is the *first-born among many Brethren*, to *whose Image we are predestinated to be conformed*, and who in all Things has the Pre-eminence; (*Rom.* viii. 29. *Col.* i. 18.) and that we, thro' him, § might be brought to the most intimate Union and Communion with, and Enjoyment of God himself, as a peculiar People appropriated and consecrated to him, and *formed for himself, that we might shew forth his Praise:* (Isa. xliii. 21.) All which intirely proceeds from, and is owing, not to any Worthiness in us, nor to any Necessity or Obligation that lay upon him, but merely to that free Determination of his own sovereign Will and Pleasure, which moved him to it, and which he takes the greatest Complacency in above all the other Purposes of his Heart, as he *delights in Mercy*, (Mich. vii. 18.)

6 *To the Praise of the Glory of his Grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*

6. His ultimate End in all this was * that, as his great *Goodness, Benignity* or *Kindness* is that Perfection of his Nature, which sheds a Glory upon all the rest, and which he rejoices in with peculiar Delight, and on Account of which he is infinitely amiable in himself, and worthy of all possible Honour, Blessing and Praise; so it might be illustriously manifested and display'd in the most endearing Manner to the Objects of his Love, as superlatively and adorably glorious; and Revenues of Admiration, Blessing and Praise might be paid to his great Name for it, who by the free Determination and Exercise of his Grace, has rendered us acceptable to himself, as his Children, in and through his first, and best, and eminently beloved, even

† God's *choosing us in Christ*, as our common Head, may relate to his singling us out in his Love from others, whom he passed by or left to themselves; and some, putting a Stop after, *before him*, join *in Love*, at the Close of the last Verse, to the Beginning of this; and his *predestinating us* may relate to the great and glorious Things to which he chose us in Christ, that we, as the Children of God, might have all Blessedness and Honour in and through him.

§ *To himself*, or as it might be render'd *to him* (εις αυτον) may refer either to *Christ*, or to *God the Father*.

* Here is a noble, beautiful and affecting Gradation *from his Grace, to the Glory of his Grace*, and from the Glory of his Grace, to the *Praise of its Glory*.

his

his own emphatically *dear Son*, (Col. i. 13.) in whom he is well pleased, and for whose Sake, and on whose Account, he is so with us, as we are looked upon and considered in him, (*Mat.* iii. 17.)

7. In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace;

7. In this beloved Son, as our Head and Redeemer, and by Virtue of our Union with him, we, whom God has chosen, predestinated and accepted in him, (*v.* 4, 5, 6) have a compleat and glorious Deliverance from all Evil, and a Recovery to all Blessedness, and *that* at the * inestimable Price of his own precious Blood, which he shed at his Father's Call, in the most terrible Manner, for the Satisfaction of his Law and Justice in a Way of Atonement for Sin; so that on this Account, in Conjunction with all his Sufferings and Obedience which were finished at his Death, we have free and full Forgiveness of all Trespasses (*Col.* ii. 13.) which includes, or draws after it, a Deliverance from the Curse of the Law and the Wrath of God, from the Power of Sin and Satan, and from the Sting of Death, together with a Recovery to all possible Happiness and Glory in our whole Persons, which shall be perfectly enjoyed at the *Redemption of our Bodies*: And these, as well as all the rest of the fore mentioned Benefits, are not from any Desert or Worthiness in us, but merely from the inexhaustible Fulness, Excellence, Liberality and boundless Overflowings of the free Mercy and Favour of

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* Several Interpreters of no small Note have observed that the *Tense* is here chang'd from the *past* to the *present*, which they suppose is to distinguish the Blessings here mention'd, as what we receive in Time, from those that were spoken of in the preceding Verse, as what was done in God's gracious Acts concerning us from all Eternity. But tho' this may be allow'd, with regard to the Blessings mention'd, *ver.* 4, 5; yet I much doubt whether there be any solid Ground for this Observation, as it relates to God's having *made us accepted in the Beloved*, which is the last Thing mention'd before the Alteration of the *Tense*; for in the next following Verses. 8, 9, 11, the Apostle re-assumes the *past* Tense, where he saies, *God has abounded toward us in all Wisdom and Prudence, having made known to us the Mysteries of his Will*; and we *have obtain'd an Inheritance in Christ*, all which, as these Interpreters themselves allow, relate to the Blessings bestow'd *in Time*, as much as our *having Redemption through Christ's Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins*, can be supposed to do.——As to the Nature of this Redemption, we may observe that the Scripture sometimes speaks of Redemption *by Power*, as when God said he would *redeem Israel* from their *Egyptian* Bondage with a *stretched-out Arm, and with great Judgments*. (Exod. vi 6.) But at other Times it speaks of Redemption *by Price*, as when the *Houses* and *Lands* of *Israel* were to be redeemed by a proper Price paid for them; and when a poor *Israelite*, who had sold himself to a Stranger, was to be redeem'd by his Kinsman's *paying the Price of his Sale* (See *Lev.* xxv 23—52.) And what the Apostle here speaks of is manifestly *Redemption by Price*; for that's the primitive Signification of the Word (ἀπολύτρωσιν) here used, which is elsewhere called Christ's *having obtained eternal Redemption* (λύτρωσιν) by *his own Blood*; (*Heb.* ix. 12) and is expressed by his giving his Life (λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν) *a Ransom* or *Price of Redemption* for many; that is, by his dying in their Room and Stead for their Deliverance from all the Captivity, Bondage and Miseries, which Sin had subjected them to. Accordingly 'tis here called *Redemption through Christ's Blood*; and answerable hereunto, we are said to be *bought with a Price*, (1 *Cor.* vi. 20) and what this Price is we are told, when 'tis said *ye were redeem'd* (ἐλυτρώθητε) *not with corruptible Things, as Silver and Gold, but with the precious Blood of Christ*; (1 Peter i. 18, 19.) and in the Passage before us, they that *are made accepted in the Beloved*, ver 6. are said to *have Redemption in him*, as in their public Head and Representative, Sponsor and Surety, who has actually paid down the Price of it for them, and is, and for ever will be, the Subject of all its Glory, and of all that Merit and Efficacy, whereby they are made Partakers of it, to the Forgiveness of their Sins in virtue of their Union with him.

God

God the Father §, as he of his own good Pleasure contrived, appointed, gave, and accepted of Christ; who also, in the Greatness of his Love, graciously consented to lay down his Life for our Ransom, without so much as our knowing or desiring it: And God has graciously appointed and revealed this, and laid out the Way and Method of freely making over all the Benefit of it to us in a Way of believing, and has freely given us Faith therein, on Christ's Account, for our own Salvation, (*Chap.* ii. 8.)

8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all Wisdom and Prudence.

8. In the breaking forth and Over-flowings of this rich Grace, as from its Fountain-fulness, God has abundantly manifested to us the highest Wisdom and Counsel in contriving and executing his eternal Scheme for advancing the Glory of all his Perfections, that his Holiness, Truth and Justice, together with every other Attribute of the divine Nature, might concur and harmonize with his Grace in saving us through Christ's Redemption: (*v.* 7.) * And, in this his abundant Grace, he has given to us, at our Conversion, the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the Knowledge of himself and of his Son, (*v.* 17.) *whom to know is Life eternal*; (John xvii. 3) and has made our *Love to abound in Knowledge and in all Judgment, that we may approve Things that are excellent*; (Phil. i. 9, 10) and that the Benefits of his own Love and of Christ's Purchase might be effectually apply'd to us through Faith, whereby we are brought to trust in Christ, (*ver.* 12, 13) are made *wise to Salvation*, (2 Tim. iii. 15) and are taught to know, regard and practise our Duty with Understanding and Discretion.

9 Having made known unto us the Mystery of his Will, according to his good Pleasure which he

9. All this Wisdom and Prudence has God discover'd and convey'd to us, by means of the Gospel-Revelation, and by the attending Illumination of his Spirit in our Hearts, as he therein has open'd to us his gracious Scheme of Salvation by Jesus Christ for lost Sinners of all Sorts, and of

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§ *The Riches of his Grace* may indeed by the Construction refer to *Christ*, who is the nearest Antecedent; and therefore I have glanced at it in the Paraphrase: But 'tis more generally, and I think most properly, referr'd to the *Father*; because *the Glory of his Grace* had been spoken of in the Verse next before it; and 'tis he that is meant in the Progress of the Discourse, as the Person who bestows all the farther Blessings, mention'd in the three following Verses: And though the endearing Love and Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ was exceeding and abundant in redeeming us to God by his Blood; yet all the Blessings of Salvation are most usually through the Scripture, and particularly in this Epistle, ascribed to the *Father's* Grace, as their original Source and Fountain: And *the Riches of his Grace* are very consistent with Christ's paying the full Price of our Redemption for the Reasons assign'd in the Paraphrase, by which it appears that, how dear soever it cost Christ, 'tis all intirely free, without the least Expence to us, or Motive taken from any Good in us; and the *Riches* of the Grace of God are magnify'd in much higher and more affecting Strains, by its most freely providing for an honourable Forgiveness of our Sins at so costly and self-denying a Rate, as by delivering his own eternal, dearly beloved Son in our Nature to the worst of Deaths, than if it had been granted by a mere Act of sovereign Prerogative, without any Regard to the Rights or Satisfaction of Justice.

* *All Wisdom and Prudence* in this Verse may relate either to *God*, in his Scheme of Salvation by Jesus Christ, and Discovery of it by the Gospel, and in his Actings toward Believers; or may relate to *them*, in what he has wrought in them. The Connection with *ver.* 7. may lead us to the *first*, and with *ver.* 9. to the *last* of these.

what

hath purposed in himself :

what Nation soever; which may be called a *Mystery*, because it was from all Eternity hid as an impenetrable Secret in God's own Breast, (*Chap.* iii. 9) and was but obscurely hinted in the dark Types, Promises and Prophesies of the Old Testament, compared with the brighter and fuller Revelation that is now made of it to the Saints; (*Col.* i. 26) and 'tis such a great *Mystery of Godliness*, and contains such *unsearchable Riches of Christ*, that, notwithstanding the Gospel-Revelation, it still is hid from Unbelievers, whose Minds the God of this World has blinded; (2 *Cor.* iv. 3, 4) and has Breadths and Lengths, and Depths and Heighths, that surpass all the Knowledge of true Believers themselves. (*Ephes.* iii. 18, 19. See the Note on 1 *Cor.* ii. 7.) And it may be called the *Mystery of his Will*, because it took its Rise merely from his own sovereign Will, according to his free Determination, as seemed good in his Sight. (*Mat.* xi. 27. and *Luke* x. 21.) And this he resolved upon from all Eternity for his own Glory, without the least Motive or Inducement from any other whatsoever.

10 *That in the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times, he might gather together in one all Things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on Earth,* even *in him :*

10. That in the last Dispensation of God's Grace under the Gospel-state, which may be called *the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times*, because it is a Completion of the various Seasons of his gracious Dealings with the apostate Sons of Men, and was introduced as soon as the Time was fully come, which he had appointed for it, and had fore-told in antient Prophecies, and in which all Things were ripe for it by a general Expectation of the Messiah, and by a most deplorable and universal Degeneracy and Corruption in Doctrine and Manners among both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, which made it the most seasonable Time of God's appearing for their Help and Recovery, and for magnifying the Glory of his Grace therein: At this fittest Time, I say, he in his adorable Wisdom, Condescension and Kindness, took the Opportunity to bring in this concluding Administration of the richest Mercy, that he might set to-rights all the Disorder and Enmity that Sin had introduced, and (ανακεφαλαιωσασθαι) by gathering together the scattered Parts of intelligent Creatures, might recapitulate, reduce and place them in Order again under Christ, as their Head, including both the holy Angels, as also the glorified Saints in Heaven *, and believing *Jews* and *Gentiles* of all Nations and Degrees of Sinners upon Earth, by re-uniting them into one Body for mutual Affection and Communion, and for joint Worship (*Phil.* ii. 9, 10. *Heb.* xii. 22, 23. and *Rev.* v. 11—14,) under Christ, who is a Head of Confirmation and Govern-

* *All Things* (τα παντα) in the *neuter* Gender is sometimes used for *all Persons*, as appears from *Gal.* iii. 22, compared with *Rom.* xi. 32, in the first of which Places, *he has concluded all under Sin*, the *Neuter*, (τα παντα) and in the second, *has concluded them all in Unbelief*, the *Masculine* Gender (τους παντας) is used.

ment to Angels; a Head of Righteousness, of Representation and Redemption, as well as of the most peculiar Influence and Government, to the Church that is gathered from among Men; and a Head of Reconciliation to both the *Jewish* and *Gentile* Sorts of them between themselves, and between God, Angels and them, (*Chap* ii. 14, 15, 16. and *Col.* i. 20.) that they might all be brought into a new State of Peace and Friendship with God and one another, and might be all set in their proper *Place*, and all summ'd up and comprehended in Christ, as Head over all Things to the Church, (*v.* 21, 22, 23.)

11 *In whom also we have obtained an Inheritance, being predestinated according to the Purpose of him who worketh all Things after the Counsel of his own Will:*

11. In whom also, for the Accomplishment of this great Design *, we of the *Jewish* Nation, who believe, have been admitted in our effectual Calling to a Part and Portion in, and have a Right and Title to, and Possession in Christ our Head of, the glorious Inheritance of eternal Life †, which is disposed of by sovereign Grace to us, as it were by Lot, and belongs to the Adoption of Sons, to which we were predestinated, (*v.* 5.) according to the free and unchangeable Purpose of God, who works with almighty Energy, (ενεργουντος) not at random, nor from a Necessity of Nature to the utmost of what he could do, but according to the Contrivance and Direction of his infinite Wisdom, and the free Determination of his own Good-will and Pleasure, as to what he sees to be most fit and proper for him to do.

12 *That we should be to the Praise of his Glory, who first trusted in Christ.*

12. That we, the natural Seed of *Abraham*, to whom the Gospel was first preached, and who first were brought to depend upon, and hope in Christ (προηλπικοτας εν τω χριστω) for all Salvation, might be Monuments of his Grace to its eternal Glory, and might glorify him for his *Mercy*, in *making*, and his *Truth* and *Faithfulness* in *fulfilling his Promises*, which he granted to our Fathers, (*Micah* vii. 20.) and which he has performed to us, as a People who were first taken into

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† That this is meant of the Believing *Jews* is plain to me, not only because the Apostle here includes himself with the Persons he is speaking of, (see the Note on *ver.* 3.) but in the next Verse describes them as those, who *first trusted in Christ*, before the Gospel was preached to the *Gentiles*; and then by way of Distinction from them, he manifestly speaks of the *Gentiles*, ver. 13, who afterwards trusted in Christ also, when, upon the Rejection of the Unbelieving *Jews*, the Gospel of Salvation came to be preached to them; and that the *Jews*, and not the *Gentiles* at *Ephesus*, were the first that believed in Christ, appears from the Account we have of their Conversion, *Acts* xviii. 19, 24—28, and xix. 1—10; and that the *Gentile-Ephesians* were not the first Converts among that Sort of People is plain, because other *Gentiles* believed before them, as appears from *Acts* xiii. 45—48.

§ The Word (κληρος) from which this (εκληρωθημεν) is derived, and is here render'd *we have obtain'd an Inheritance*, signifies a *Part* or *Portion*, Acts viii. 21, *an Inheritance*, Acts xxvi. 18, and Col. i, 12. and *a Lot*, Acts xiii. 19, with a manifest Reference to God's ordering, that the Inheritance of the Land of *Israel* should be divided among their several Tribes *by Lot*, Numb. xxvi. 55, the whole disposing of which was of the Lord: *Prov.* xvi. 33. All these Senses may be included in what is here said of the *heavenly Inheritance*. And as an Inheritance peculiarly belongs to *Children*, and the Apostle here speaks of being *predestinated to it*, he seems to refer back to what he had said *ver.* 5, about their being *predestinated to the Adoption of Children by Jesus Christ*, which shews that it related, if not principally, yet at least equally, to *Jewish*, as well as *Gentile* Believers.

Co-

Covenant with him, and to whom he primarily sent his Son to bless us in turning us away from our Iniquities; (*Acts* iii. 26.) and so the Gospel is the Power of God unto Salvation *to every one that believes, to the* Jew *first*, &c. (*Rom.* i. 16.)

13 *In whom ye also* trusted, *after that ye heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your Salvation: In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of Promise.*

13. In whom those of you that are of the *Gentile* Sort have also trusted, according to the Nature and Design of his last gracious Dispensation under the Gospel-state *, and have obtained a Right and Title to the eternal Inheritance equally with the believing *Jews*, when ye in due Time came to hear the preaching of that bless'd Doctrine, which is infallibly and emphatically true, and the most important of all Truths, as it contains the Substance of the spiritual Blessings, of which the ceremonial Law was only a Shadow, and has the highest Attestation to it from Heaven, as such; even the glad Tidings of Salvation, as they are brought to you by the Gospel, which publishes it, and shows the Way of attaining it, and assures every true Believer of it; and which has been made effectual to the saving of your own Souls through Faith in Christ Jesus. In whom also, by Virtue of your Union with him, after ye had believed in a saving Manner, ye were still further sanctified, and more evidently impressed with the holy Image of God, as Wax is with the Lineaments of the Seal †: And as the sealing of Deeds of Inheritance is used to ascertain its Heirs of their Title to it; and sa Merchants, after they have bought their Goods, set their own Seal upon them to distinguish them from others; so ye were assured of your personal Interest in the eternal Inheritance, or of your being Heirs of God and joint Heirs with Christ, by his Spirit of Adoption, who is holy in his Nature and Operations, and has made you holy by his sanctifying and sealing you; and is the great Promise of the New Testament, (*Acts* i. 4. and ii. 33. and *Gal.* iii. 14.) and *that* particularly under the Character *of the Spirit of Truth*, and the *Comforter*; (John xiv. 16, 17.) and who in his *sealing Work* brings home and applies the Promises with Light and

* This Expression in the *Greek* is *Elliptical.* Our Translators have filled up what is wanting in it, by re-assuming the Word *trusted*, from the last Clause of the preceding Verse; but, perhaps, it might be as well supplied by adding, instead of that, *have obtain'd an Inheritance*, which had been affirm'd of the Believing *Jews* at the Beginning of *ver.* 11, and is here again affirmed of the Believing *Gentile*.

† This *Sealing of the holy Spirit of Promise* is, I think, by no Means to be confined to the *extraordinary Gifts* of the Spirit, because 'tis such a Sealing *as was an Earnest of the Inheritance*, which can't be said merely of extraordinary Gifts; many having been endow'd with them, who had not any Security for Heaven, or Earnest to assure them of it, and give them a Part of the Inheritance itself, as appears from *Mat.* vii. 22, 23. And therefore it seems necessary to refer this *Sealing of the Spirit* to some further Work of Grace in their Hearts, beyond their first Believing, whereby they were not only impressed with the Image of the Seal, but were likewise assured of their own personal Interest in Christ, and in the heavenly Inheritance, with a Reference to which this Sealing of the Spirit is here mention'd: And this is evidently spoken of as a Work *distinct* from that, which passed in them at their *first believing*, and as what follow'd *after it*; and therefore could not be of *the Essence* of true Faith.

Power to our own Souls, for the Establishment of our Faith and Hope in Christ, (2 *Cor.* i. 21, 24.)

14 *Which is the Earnest of our Inheritance, until the Redemption of the purchased Possession, unto the Praise of his Glory.*

14. Which Spirit as given to us, whether we be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, and as dwelling and working Faith and Love in us, (*v.* 15.) and as sealing us, (*v.* 13.) is a Security, Pledge and Earnest of the glorious Inheritance of the Saints in Light, and gives the plainest Evidence to us of our Right and Title to it; and is indeed itself a Part and Fore-taste of it for our present Satisfaction and Joy, till we and all God's peculiar People, who were redeemed by the Death of Christ, (*Titus* ii. 14.) and are his purchased Inheritance ||, shall be fully delivered from all Sin and Sorrow, and advanced to the Possession of all possible Glory, which was to be redeemed by our near Kinsman, because we had forfeited it by Sin, which accordingly he purchased for us, and to which he will raise us when he shall *quicken our mortal Bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us.* (Rom. viii. 11.) All this tends unto, and shall issue in the highest Exaltation of the glorious Name of God, the Father, Son and Spirit: And that such wonderful Grace should be extended to *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, is for the greater Illustration of his Glory, that every Subject of it might shew forth his Praise, on Account of the effectual Application of the Holy Spirit, who enabled them to trust in Christ, and has sealed them to, and is the Earnest of their Inheritance, as well as on Account of the *Election* of the Father, who predestinated them to it, (*v.* 4, 5.) and of the *Redemption* of Christ, (*v.* 7.) who purchased both it for them, and them for it, and in whom they have obtained it, (*v.* 11, 12.)

15 *Wherefore I also, after I heard of your Faith in the Lord Jesus, and Love unto all the Saints.*

15, 16. In Reflection therefore on the Grace of God toward you of the *Gentile*, as well as *Jewish* Sort, in his choosing, redeeming and effectually calling you, (*v.* 4, *&c.*) which is now still more abundantly manifested by its peculiar and abiding Effects upon you, I, who have your spiritual Welfare intirely at heart, greatly rejoice in it †; and ever

|| *Purchased Possession* may relate either to the *Church of God*, which are a *peculiar People*, whom he *has purchased* with his own Blood (περιεποιησατο) 1 *Pet.* ii. 9, and *Acts* xx. 28; or to *Heaven* itself, which is spoken of as the *purchased Salvation of the Soul* (περιποιησιν ψυχης) *Heb.* x. 39; it having been so, when Christ *obtained eternal Redemption* by his Blood *for us.* Heb. ix. 12.

* What the Apostle says about his *hearing of their Faith and Love* is no Proof, as some would have it, that he had not been the Instrument of their Conversion, or that he had never seen them; for tho' he speaks of the *Thessalonians* as having received the Gospel by his Ministry, 1 *Epistle* i. 5, 6, 9; yet he says to them, *Chap.* iii. 6—10, *when Timotheus came from you to us, and brought us good Tidings of your Faith and Charity — Therefore, Beloved, we were comforted over you*, &c. And writing to *Philemon*, whom he speaks of as owing *even* his own self to him, probably because he was his spiritual Father, *ver.* 19, he says *ver.* 4, 5, *I thank my God, making Mention of thee always in my Prayers, hearing of thy Love and Faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and towards all his Saints*; and so his *hearing of the Faith and Love* of these *Ephesians*, as well as of the *Thessalonians* and *Philemon*, most naturally relates to the Accounts which he had received of their Stedfastness, Perseverance and Increase in Faith and Love, since he left them, and during the Space of so many Years as he had been absent from them; this Epistle having been wrote, according to the lowest Computation, about five Years after the

ever since I received an Account of the Continuance and Eminence of your Trust and Hope in the Lord Jesus, as your only Head and Saviour, and of the affectionate Love that your Faith in him has produced to all, without Distinction, that bear his Image and are his Children begotten of him, whether they be weaker or stronger Believers, attended with greater or lesser Infirmities, or of whatever Denomination or Party: Ever since, I say, I heard these comfortable Tidings of the Faith and Love that are among you, and that abide with you, (καθ' ὑμᾶς) and was thereby further assured of your having a real Interest in all the fore-mentioned Benefits; my Soul is filled with so much Joy on your Behalf, that * whenever I make my solemn Addresses to God, especially in my secret Retirements every Morning and Evening, as well as on other Occasions, publick or private, I bear you continually upon my Heart, which is enlarged for you, in a Way of blessing and praising God for his Grace bestowed on you, and in a Way of fervent Supplication and Prayer, as particularly remembring and mentioning you in my humble Pleas with him.

16 *Cease not to give Thanks for you, making Mention of you in my Prayers;*

17 *That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation, in the Knowledge of him.*

17. That he, who is the Covenant-God of our Lord Jesus Christ, as he appointed and called him to, and qualified him for, and according to his Promises accepted and rewarded him in his mediatorial Work, as the Head and Saviour of the Church †; who also may be stiled *the Father of Glory*, as he is infinitely glorious in himself, and in the whole Scheme of Salvation; and is the Fountain, Author and Giver of all the Glory, that Christ himself is possessed of in his human Nature and Office-Capacity, and of all the Blessedness and Glory, that not only the Angels, but the Saints in Heaven do, or ever shall enjoy in, thro', and together with him; and who is to be eternally admired and glorified for all this; My earnest Supplication to God under these exalted and encouraging Conceptions of him is, that he would please to increase the free Commu-

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the last Time of his being at *Ephesus*; and his Joy and Praise on their Account might be the greater, because he then told them, by a prophetic *Spirit*, of the Danger they would be exposed to from corrupt Teachers, which would spring up among them. *Acts* xx. 29, 30.

* 'Tis not to be supposed that the Apostle was *always* actually giving Thanks or praying for them; but his *not ceasing* to do it intimates the Constancy of his Remembrance of them in solemn Prayer; and he seems principally to refer to his daily set Times for that Duty every Morning and Evening, according to the general Custom of the *Jews* at the Time of the Morning and Evening Sacrifice; and as that was called the *continual Burnt-Offering*, Ex. xxix. 42; so they were said to *serve God instantly Day and Night*, Acts xxvi. 7; and the Disciples were said to be *continually in the Temple, praising and blessing God.* Luke xxiv. 53.

† God the Father is the *God of our Lord Jesus Christ*, as Man and Mediator; (see the Note on *ver.* 3.) and his being stiled the *Father of Glory* may be consider'd either as a *personal* Character to distinguish him not only from the *Son*, who is called the *King of Glory*, and the *Lord of Glory*, Ps. xxiv. 10. and 1 Cor. ii. 8. but also from the *Holy Ghost*, who is called the *Spirit of Glory*, 1 Peter iv. 14; and so either of them *personally*, and all together *essentially*, may be called the *God of Glory*, Ps. xxix. 3. Or it may be consider'd as an *œconomical* Character to intimate, that all communicative Glory is first derived from *the Father*.

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nications of his inlightning and sealing Spirit *, to lead you into further Exercises of Faith, Love and other Graces, and into a still more clear and experimental Acquaintance and Communion with him, as those that are made wise to Salvation; and that he would yet more abundantly shed abroad his Love in your Hearts by the Holy-Ghost, (*Rom.* v. 5.) to give you the brightest, sweetest and most assuring Manifestations of his Love to your own Souls, in your further Knowledge of himself in Christ †, as your own Covenant-God and Father, and in your growing and approving Acknowledgement of him (εν επιγνωσει αυτου) as such.

18 *The Eyes of your Understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the Hope of his Calling, and what the Riches of the Glory of his Inheritance in the Saints,*

18. I humbly beseech § him to give you the Illumination of his Spirit in your Hearts, for irradiating the Eyes of your Minds to such an eminent Degree, as that ye may know by daily Experience, and with the utmost Certainty and Delight, what a sincere and genuine Hope yours is ‖, what excellent Objects 'tis pitched upon, and what solid never-failing Grounds ye have for that Hope, to which God has called you externally by the Gospel, and internally by his special and effectual Grace; and that by spiritual Meditations, Prelibations, and realizing Views of Faith, ye may know with lively Sentiments, just Propriety and great Compass of Thought; and may know for yourselves, what is the true Nature and transcendent Excellency of those invaluable and immense Treasures of Blessedness, which God, the Father of Glory, hath provided, as an Inheritance, *according to his Riches in Glory by Christ Jesus*, (Phil. iv. 19.) for holy Souls; an Inheritance which he has in the Riches of his Grace given to them, as his Children, for an everlasting Possession; which will make them exceeding rich and glorious, and consists in the Enjoyment of himself, who is their *Portion* and *Glory*; Ps. xvi. 5. and *Is.* lx. 19.) and which he counts it his Glory to bestow upon them, and will be eminently glorified by in them,

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* *The Spirit of Revelation* is not to be understood of the *extraordinary immediate Revelations*, that were peculiar to inspired Men: For this *Spirit of Revelation* is what the Apostle prays might be given to every Member of the Church; and so relates to what may be hoped for in common by all true Believers as such; and is a Revelation peculiar to them in the *ordinary way* of special gracious Illumination to their spiritual Advantage, which our Blessed Lord spoke of, *Mat.* xi. 25, 26, 27, and xvi. 17.

† *Him*, by the Construction, relates to the *Father of Glory* to whom the Address was made, rather than to Christ, who is mention'd only incidentally in the foregoing Part of the Verse: However, to include both, I have consider'd it as the Knowledge of God in Christ.

§ The former Part of these Words (πεφωτισμενους τους οφθαλμους της διανοιας υμων) being the *Accusative* Case after the Verb *give* (δωη) *ver.* 17, is apparently govern'd by *that*; and so, with supplying that Verb, might be more grammatically render'd, that he would give *enlighten'd Eyes of your Mind*, or *Eyes of your Understanding enlighten'd*, which makes it a Continuation of the Prayer for still farther enlightning, even *unto their knowing* (εις το ειδεναι) *what is the Hope of his Calling.*

‖ *Hope* is sometimes put for that *Grace* itself, *Rom.* v. 4, 5, and xv. 13; at other Times, for the *Object* of it, *Col.* i. 5, and *Titus* ii. 13; and at others, for the *Grounds* of Hope, *Ezra* x. 2, *Jer.* xviii. 12, *Lam.* iii. 29, and *Rom.* iv. 18, first Clause; and. perhaps, all these Senses may be fitly enough taken in here, tho' the two last seem to be principally intended.

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(2 *Thes.* i. 10.) whom he has taken for his own Inheritance, (*Deut.* xxxii. 9.) and on whom he as it were lays out all his Riches to complete their Felicity and Glory.

19 *And what* is *the exceeding Greatness of his Power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty Power*;

19, 20. My Heart's Desire and Prayer to God for all these comfortable, edifying and confirming Manifestations of his Spirit is, that ye may not only have the most desirable Insight into the exceeding Riches of his Grace toward you; but may likewise understand and consider, for your further Encouragement and Joy, what it the superabundant, transcendent, all-conquering Greatness of his Power, which has already exerted itself in our Favour, whether we be *Jews* or *Gentiles* *, by its working Faith in us, as he then infused a vital Principle into our dead Souls, and effectually subdued all the Power, which Satan and this World had over us, together with the corrupt Inclinations and Desires of the Flesh and of the Mind, and the Prejudices and Enmity of our Hearts, all which united their utmost Efforts against God, and against his Work upon us: (*Chap.* ii. 1, 2, 3.) And I pray that ye may know the Greatness of his Power, which is continually employed for our Safe-defence, Support and Preservation through all Dangers and Difficulties here, (1 *Pet.* i. 5.) and will be gloriously display'd in raising us up, Body as well as Soul, to a State of complete Blessedness hereafter; as effected according to the same Energy of the Power of his

20 *Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right Hand in the heavenly* Places.

Might, which he effectually exerted in Christ himself, the Head of the Church, when by his Almighty Power, as well as in a Way of Justice, he loosed the Bands, and raised him up in his publick Capacity, as a triumphant Conqueror over Death and all the Powers of Darkness; (*Acts* ii 24.) and when, in Consequence of his Resurrection, God, by the same omnipotent Arm, exalted him in his human Nature, to a State of all possible Blessedness, Majesty and Glory, and to a quiet everlasting Possession of all royal Dignities and Delights in the highest Heaven, and in Things that pertain to his heavenly Kingdom, as the Re-

* The Apostle here brings in *himself*, and his *Jewish* Brethren, to shew that his Love was not confined in this excellent Prayer to *Gentile* Believers; and very probably, when he came to speak of the *exceeding Greatness of God's Power toward them*, he reflected on that which was so remarkably exerted in his own Conversion, *Acts* ix. 3—9; and *so to us-ward who believe, according to the Working of his mighty Power*, &c. relates to the mighty Power that was put forth for the Working of Faith itself in their Hearts at their first Conversion, as well as in its subsequent Acts toward them, till they should be brought safe to Glory: And that it, at least, includes a Reference to the first Work of heart-changing Grace, may be gather'd from the Apostle's speaking of it in the next Words, as a Power of the like Kind with that, *which wrought in Christ when God raised him from the Dead*; and in Correspondence thereunto, 'tis called in some following Verses, *Chap.* ii. 1, 5, God's *quickning them that were dead in Trespasses and Sins*, and *quickning them together with Christ*; and is afterwards called, ver. 10, *his creating them in Christ unto good Works*, which carries the highest Idea of divine Power, that is known in all the Works of Nature; and in that parallel Epistle, *Col.* ii. 11. 12, it is called their being *risen with Christ through the Faith of the Operation of God, who raised him from the Dead*, and their being *quicken'd together with him*, as those that were *dead in their Sins and in the Uncircumcision of their Flesh*.

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ward of his Sufferings, after he had by himself purged our Sins, (*Heb.* i. 3.) which may be called in metaphorical Terms, God the Father's setting him at his own Right-hand, in Token of the highest Approbation and Honour.

21 *Far above all Principality, and Power, and Might, and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but also in that which is to come:*

21. He has herein advanced him far above all Creatures whatsoever in Place and Dignity, and with such Supremacy and Rule over even the greatest, as well as the least of them, as surpasses all Thought and Expression; He has invested him with uncontrolable Authority and Dominion over all Demons and their Chief in Hell; and over all Ranks and Orders of Angels in Heaven; (*Col.* ii. 15.) (See *Heb.* i. 6, 14.) * and over all the Princes and Potentates, Nobles, Powers and Magistrates on Earth, and over every Person, Dignity, or Authority of what Character soever, that is or can be ever known or mentioned, not only in this present World, but likewise in that which is future to us, even in the heavenly World, where he reigns in all his Glory, *Angels and Authorities, and Powers being made subject to him*, (1 Pet. iii, 22.) at *whose Name every Knee shall bow of Things in Heaven, and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth*, in Token of their Homage and Subjection to him, (*Phil.* ii. 10.)

22 *And put all* Things *under his Feet, and gave him* to be *the Head over all Things to the Church,*

22. And as the most absolute Victory and Power over Enemies is signified by their being put under the Conqueror's Feet; (*Josh.* x. 23, 24.) so God the Father, in that universal Lordship which he has given to Christ over all Creatures, has placed all his Enemies in a State of Subjection to him, that he may have them intirely under his own Power, and may reign as a rightful Conqueror over them, in such a Way as he sees fit, till all their Opposition to him, his People and Cause, shall be intirely defeated, and they be all actually subdued under him, trampled on as his Footstool, and finally destroyed by him: (*Psal* cx. 1. and 1 *Cor.* xv. 25, 26.) And § as the chief Glory and Delight of the Mediator lies in his *having Power over all Flesh, that he may give eternal Life to as many, as the Father hath given him*;

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* *Principalities and Powers* are apply'd to *good Angels*, Chap. iii. 10; to *evil Angels*, Chap. vi. 12. and to *Men*, Luke xii. 11, where the same Words (*αρχαι και εξουσιαι*) are used, as here, and so they are translated with Reference to *Men*, *Titus* iii. 1; and as the Apostle here speaks of those that are *not only in this World, but also in that which is to come*, he by just Construction includes them all, and intimates that there are different Ranks, Orders and Degrees of Government and Subordination among the Holy Angels, and Evil Spirits, in the future invisible State, as well as among Men in the present visible World; and that Christ is far exalted above them all, even the highest of them, under what Names or Titles soever they may be distinguished. (See Dr. *Goodwin* on the Place, Vol. I. Sermon 32.)

§ Tho' the Saints, as well as all other Creatures, are certainly under Christ's Lordship and Dominion, and in that Sense are included in the *All Things* that are *put under his Feet*, according to the widest Sense of that Expression, as we have it 1 *Cor.* xv. 25, 26, 27, and *Heb.* ii. 8; yet as in the *Corinthians* 'tis mention'd with a special Reference to *subduing* and *destroying all his Enemies*, so in the Application of this Passage here, it seems to be still more confin'd to that View; because Christ's Universal Empire over all Things had been strongly expressed in the Verse before, and then, in the next Verse after, the Church is spoken of as *his Body* in Distinction from *all Things that are put under his Feet*, and he is said to be Head over all Things *to the Church*, or for their Good.

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(John xvii. 2.) so God in his infinite Love to him and them, and in the righteous and honourable Recompence of his Sufferings and Death for them, has given him absolute and universal Dominion in the Kingdom of Providence, as well as of Grace, over all Persons and Things, with this ultimate View and Design ||, that he may manage, overrule, restrain, order and issue all Events for the spiritual and eternal Benefit of the catholic invisible Church, inclusive of every true Believer; and for the Preservation of the visible Church, that it may never be rooted out of the World: Yea, over and above all the fore-mentioned Donations, God has added this, as the highest and most eminent Gift of his Love to him and to his Church, that he, who is Lord of all, should be in the dearest, most intimate and peculiar Relation, not only a Head of Guidance and Government, but also of Life and Influence, and of tender Care and Protection to the Whole, and every true Member of it, which stand in as near and vital Union with him, and have as effectual Communication for Activity, Growth and Strength from him, as the natural Body has from its Head.

23 *Which is his Body, the Fulness of him that filleth all in all.*

23. And which, taken all-together, are his mystical Body, and under that Notion of them are his *relative* Fulness, so that if any one, even the least Member of them, were wanting, he, as their Head, would be incomplete, though in himself he is infinitely perfect, and has no Need of them, but is the Fund of all their Supplies, as *out of his Fulness they all receive Grace for Grace.* (John i. 16.) He fills all his Members with his Spirit, and with the Gifts and Graces of every Kind, which any of them have, or are found among them all, that by Means of his Word, Officers and Ordinances, which he also fills with a divine Energy, *they may be filled with the Fruits of Righteousness,* (Phil. i. 11.) and *grow up in all Things into him who is the Head, till they come to a perfect Man, to the Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ,* (Ephes. iv. 10, 13, 15.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

How free and sovereign is the Grace of God! He from all Eternity has chosen some, rather than others, to be Sons and Heirs of Glory, not from any foreseen Goodness in them, but merely from the good Pleasure of his Will, who chose them that they might be holy from

|| This apparently relates, not to the *original Constitution* of Christ's Headship in the Days of Eternity, but to his *actual Investiture* with full Power for completely executing its great Design, as all the preceding Instances of his Exaltation do, in consequence of his Resurrection from the Dead, and his Ascension to Heaven: And God's *giving him to be Head* (ὑπὲρ πάντα) *over all Things,* or as some render it *above all,* may relate either to *his Lordship* over all Things *in general* for the Good of the Church; or to his *peculiar Headship* to the Church itself, as the chief View and final Upshot of God's Intention in the foregoing Steps of Christ's Advancement, which are mention'd in a beautiful Gradation, till they reach unto, and issue in this highest and most eminent Instance of it.

a Principle of Love to him, as the Means of their being happy for ever. And O how great is the Happiness of all such! They are blessed with all spiritual and heavenly Blessings, and accepted in the Beloved, in whom they have the Forgiveness of Sins, and obtain the Inheritance of eternal Life, according to the Riches, and to the Praise of the Glory of his Grace. This is discover'd to them in the Gospel, by means of which God abounds toward them in all Wisdom and Prudence; and by this Word of Truth, the Gospel of our Salvation, we are brought to know the Mysteries of God's Will about all these great and important Things. O wondrous Grace, that this Gospel should be brought, and made effectual to *Gentile*-Sinners! O happy Souls, that are enabled to trust in Christ for themselves, and are sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise to the Day of Redemption! How should all this engage the Saints and Faithful in Christ Jesus to glorify God for the Riches of his Grace toward them! And as the Father, Son and Spirit bear their peculiar Parts in their Salvation, how should they abound in paying the Honours that belong to them respectively for electing, redeeming and sealing Love, and wait with Faith and Hope, in a Course of holy Obedience, for the Perfecting of their final Redemption! With what Gratitude and Joy should we bless God for the Faith and Love, which he has wrought in our Souls; for the Hope, to which he has called us; and for the exceeding Greatness of his almighty Power, like that whereby Christ himself was raised from the Dead, which has been, is, and shall still further be exerted, to the Salvation of every one that believes! How earnest should we be in our Prayers, that God would give us yet more and more of the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the Knowledge of himself, and would still farther inlighten the Eyes of our Understandings, that we may experimentally know what great and glorious Things he has done and provided for us! And with what Honour should we think of Christ! In him Believers were chosen, and have Redemption through his Blood, and are sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise: In him all Things in Heaven and Earth are gathered into one, that Angels and Saints, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, might be brought into a State of mutual Friendship, Harmony and Peace. He is now ascended in our Nature, in which he rose from the Dead, to the highest Heaven, and is inthron'd in Glory at the Father's Right Hand, infinitely above all Orders of Angels, and every created Power and Dignity, that can be imagin'd in Heaven and Earth; and has a Universal Empire and Dominion in the Kingdom of Providence and Grace, that all Things might be managed, in a Subserviency to his own and his Father's Glory, for the Confusion and Destruction of all his Enemies, and for the Preservation and everlasting Welfare of his Church: He is their Head, and they are his mystical Body, every Member of which is so near and dear to him, that he would count it an Abatement of his own *relative Fulness*, were he to lose any one of them: But what a glorious Head of constant Communication is our Blessed Lord, that they may be filled, in his Time and Way, with all the Fulness of God!

CHAP. II.

The Apostle still farther to magnify the Riches of God's free Grace toward the Ephesians, *represents their deplorable State by Nature, whether they were* Gentiles *or* Jews, 1—3. *Shows what a happy Change divine Grace had made upon it,* 4—10. *And to inhance his Grace, especially toward the* Gentile-*part among them, he calls upon them to reflect upon their former State of Heathenism, and the exceeding great Privileges and Blessings, which they were brought into by the Gospel, equally with the believing* Jews, *as one Body with them,* 11—22.

TEXT.

1 AND *you* hath he quickned, *who were dead in Trespasses and Sins.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. AS God, by the exceeding Greatness of his Power, (*Chap.* i. 20.) raised the crucified Body of Christ from the dead, and *that* as a public Person; so by an Opera-

Operation of the same Almighty Power toward them who believe, (*Chap.* i. 19. *) he has also raised you up to a Life of Justification from the Guilt of Sin and Condemnation of the Law, as having forgiven you all Trespasses; and has quickned you to a Life of Holiness in the Renovation of your Nature, as having delivered you from the Power of Sin, whereby ye were *alienated from the Life of God*, (Chap. iv. 18.) that he might fit you for living to him here, and for an eternal Life in the Enjoyment of him hereafter: He has thus quickned even those of you, who were Sinners of the *Gentiles*, as well as other Believers, and who, during your unconverted State, were dead Men, not indeed by a physical or natural Death of the Soul, which is immortal, or of the animal, or civil Life, which still subsists though mortal; but in a legal and moral or spiritual Sense, with respect to the Favour and Image of God, as Persons that were dead in Law for your Transgressions †, and had received innumerable mortal Wounds by Sin to the extinguishing of the Life of God in you; and so, like Persons stabbed thro' and thro' to Death, were killed as it were over and over again, not by one Sin only, but by many, original and actual Sins, and by a Multitude of all Sorts of Offences and Errors (τοις παραπτωμασι καὶ ταις αμαρτιαις) in Heart and Life, which rendered you extremely miserable and odious, and utterly incapable, like Persons corporally dead, of reviving again by any Power of your own; or of living, breathing, moving and acting in a spiritual Manner toward God; or of having any comfortable Communion

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* This Verse is improperly cut off from the first Chapter, and made the Beginning of the second: for neither *he has quickned*, nor any other Nominative Case and Verb, are in the *Greek*. The Sense therefore is to be supply'd by something that went before, as 'tis afterwards express'd *ver.* 5; and the seven first Verses of this Chapter, and so on to *ver.* 10, are a Continuation of the Argument, which the Apostle had begun at the 19th and 20th Verses of the preceding Chapter. There he had spoke of God's *Working* in the *Ephesians* by *an exceeding Greatness of Power, according to the Working of his mighty Power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the Dead, and set him at his own Right Hand in the heavenly Places:* Upon the mentioning of which, he, in the Fulness and Fervour of his Heart, runs into a Flow of Thoughts about the Height and Glory of Christ's Exaltation in the three following Verses; then in the Beginning of this Chapter he re-assumes the Thread of his Discourse, and gives us the Reddition or Counter-part of what was done in Believers, correspondent to what had been done in Christ their Head, as they in Conformity to him, and together with him, are quicken'd from the Death of Sin, and *raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly Places in Christ*. And tho' in the first and second Verses the Apostle speaks most immediately of the *Gentile*-part among the *Ephesians*; yet, to shew that what he here says about their being Dead in Sin was not peculiar to them, but common to all Persons, *Jews* as well as *Gentiles*, in their unregenerate State, he in the third and fifth Verses speaks of the *Jews*, including himself, as having been *by Nature the Children of Wrath, even as others*, (See the 2d Note on *Chap.* i. 3) and as *dead in Sins* before. (See the Note on *Luke* ix. 60.)

† Both these Kinds of Death and Life may be here included, since the *Jews*, as well as *Gentiles*, are spoken of as *Children of Wrath*, which relates to a *legal* Death; and as raised from that Sort of Death, in which they *walked in Sin*, and *in the Lusts of their Flesh*, &c. which relates to a *spiritual* or *moral* Death, *ver.* 2, 3; and since, as has been observed, (see the Paraphrase on *Chap.* i. 20) Christ's rising in a publick Character, which this answers to, may be understood, not only of his *Body*'s being quicken'd and raised from the Grave, but likewise of his *Discharge*, as the Surety of his People, from the Guilt and Punishment of their Sins.

with him, while ye, tho' dead in Sin God-ward, were not only alive, but lively and active in all Manner of Transgressions against him and his Law.

2 Wherein in Time past ye walked according to the Course of this World, according to the Prince of the Power of the Air, the Spirit that now worketh in the Children of Disobedience.

2. In which Sins (εν αις) as being strongly addicted to them and taking Pleasure in them, ye formerly, in the Days of your Heathenism and Unregeneracy, constantly, freely and progressively, moved and acted, under one Form or another of them, like Persons that walked about in them, (περιεπατησατε) and willingly ran with the Stream, according to the present corrupt Age §, Fashion and Custom of this evil World, which *lies in Wickedness*, (1 John v. 19.) according to the Will and Desire, Instigation and Rule of the Devil as your Prince, who is also the Chief of the infernal Powers, that are united as a Body of mighty Force into one Kingdom under him, the Seat of whose Dominion is in the Air, where on some Occasions he raises Storms and Tempests, (*Job* i. 19.) and makes visionary Aerial Representations; (See the Paraphrase on *Luke* iv. 5.) and where he and his diabolical Emissaries are continually roving about this lower World. (1 *Pet.* v. 8.) Ye walked, I say, according to the Dictates of this Prince of Darkness, who is also stiled *the God of this World*, (2 *Cor.* iv. 4.) * and is the chief Ruler of those foul Spirits, by which, as by joint Concurrence, he works in the Hearts of them that obey not the Gospel, and is the Exciter and Manager of that malignant Spirit, which evidently works in these Sons of Contumacy and Unbelief, (εν τοις υιοις της απειθειας) who at this very Day addict themselves to all Iniquity.

3 Among whom also we all had our Conversation in Times past,

3. Among which Children of Disobedience, (εν οις) all of us, as Persons of the same depraved Spirit and Temper, Way and Walk, in the Days of our Unregeneracy †, even

§ The Word render'd *the Course* (τον αιωνα) sometimes signifies the *Age*, and denotes the corrupt State and Condition of Men in this World, as in 2 *Cor.* iv. 4. and *Gal.* i. 4.

* As these Words lie in the *Greek*, the exact Construction is, *the Prince of the Power of the Air, of the Spirit which now works* (τȣ πνευματος τȣ νυν ενεργȣντος) *in the Children of Disobedience*; and so the Devil is spoken of, not only as the *Prince of the Power of the Air*, but likewise as *the Prince of the Spirit that works in the Children of Disobedience.* Children of Disobedience is an *Hebraism* for *disobedient Persons*, as here and in *Chap.* v. 6; and, perhaps, may mean those that are most notoriously so, as *the Sons of Belial* usually does: And the *Spirit which works in the Children of Disobedience* may mean either those *Demons* or *Evil Spirits*, that act under him as their Chief, (see the Note on *Chap.* i. 21) and are spoken of in the *singular* Number, because they are *one* in their Design and Influence, tho' in themselves *many*, as that *Legion* of evil Spirits, which possessed the *Gadarene*, is sometimes spoken of in the *singular*, and sometimes in the *plural* Number, *Mark* v. 7—13, and *Luke* viii. 28—33; or we may understand it of that *wicked Spirit* or *Temper* in Sinners, which the Devil is the Author of. (See *Zanchy* and Dr. *Goodwin* on the Place, and Mr. *Joseph Mede*'s Diatribæ, Vol. I. pag. 30, &c. of his Works.)

† As in the Epistle to the *Romans* the Apostle proved first that the *Gentiles*, and then that the *Jews were all under Sin*, insomuch that they were no better than those, *Rom.* iii. 9; and did this to shew the Necessity of Justification and Salvation merely by Grace for one, as well as the other; so here, that he might magnify the exceeding Riches of the Grace of God to both these Sorts of People, he having shewn in the two first Verses that the *Gentiles* were in the most deplorable Circumstances of Sin and Misery, goes on in this Verse to shew the like concerning the *Jews*, including himself, before they were effectually called; and exactly parallel to this, he with the like View speaks of himself and *Titus*, who were *Jews*; (Tit. iii. 4, 5) and the Apostle *Peter*, writing to the scatter'd *Jews*, and putting himself in, speaks in like Manner, 1 *Peter* iv. 3.

in the Lusts of our Flesh, fulfilling the Desires of the Flesh and of the Mind; and were by Nature the Children of Wrath even as others.

we *Jews*, as well as the *Gentiles*, continually moved, lived and acted, as I myself particularly did, while I was a proud Pharisee, Persecutor and Blasphemer; and we were led away with divers Lusts and Pleasures, (2 *Tim.* iii. 6.) sometimes seeking to satisfy one, and at other Times another of them, *such as the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eye, and the Pride of Life*: (1 John ii. 16.) Under the Power of those evil Propensions and Workings of corrupt Nature, which may be called *our Flesh*, as 'tis convey'd to us by fleshly Generation, and is inherent in us, we then walked according to the Dictates and Inclinations of the Body of Sin, gratifying, acting over and indulging the irregular Desires and Appetites of the animal Body in all its Members, which are brutal ||, and of the Soul in all its Powers and Faculties, and particularly in its Wishes and Contrivances, which are diabolical; we therein freely consented and yielded to them, and chose them: And in Opposition to what the carnal *Jews* boast of their Privileges by Birth, as the Seed of *Abaraham*, (*Matt.* iii. 9. and *John* viii. 33, 39.) and in Distinction from the actual Sins that any, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, have been guilty of by Imitation and Custom *, we, all of us universally by Reason of original Corruption, which contains the Seeds of all Iniquity, and is intervoven with our Nature, as derived, according to the Law of ordinary Generation, from an older Father, than *Abraham*, even from fallen *Adam*, our common Head and Representative, in whom we all have sinned; (*Rom.* v. 12.) we all, I say, by our natural Birth, and as long as we

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|| *Flesh* in the foregoing Clause relates to the *whole Man*, and so signifies *the Corruption of human Nature*, as in many other Places of Scripture, (see the Note *Rom.* vii. 5) and is opposed to the spiritual and holy Principle, which is called a *divine Nature* in them that have escaped the Corruptions, which are in the World through Lust. (2 *Peter* i. 4) But here *Flesh* manifestly signifies *the Body*, and is opposed to the Soul of Man, to shew that the Lusts of corrupt Nature spread through Body and Soul, and are acted by both. (See the Paraphrase on 2 *Cor.* vii. 1.)

* If we consult the Sripture Use of the Term *by Nature* (φυσει) we shall find that when 'tis apply'd to God, it relates to what he is (φυσει) *by his own Nature and Perfections*, in Opposition to all *false Gods*, Gal. iv. 8; and when apply'd to *Men*, it relates either to what Remainders there are of *the Light of Nature* (φυσει) in Mankind, that directs and excites them to *do the Things contained in the Law*, as in *Rom.* ii. 14; or to what they are in *their natural State or by Birth*, as when the *Gentiles*, in Opposition to the Covenant-Privileges of the *Jews*, are spoken of as the *Olive-Tree*, which is wild *by Nature*, (κατα φυσιν) and as the Uncircumcision which is *by Nature* (εκ φυσεως) is opposed to the *Jews* by Nature (φυσει). These, I think, are all the Places, besides this before us (τεκνα φυσει οργης) where the Term *by Nature* occurs, either in the Old or New Testament; and there is no Appearance in any of them, that it ever signifies *by Custom*, or *by Practice*, or *customary Practice*, as some would have it here, which would indeed make the Apostle guilty of a needless Tautology; for their *customary Sinning* had been fully expressed in the former Part of the Verse; but all these Passages agree in expressing what belongs to the *Nature* of the Persons, to whom 'tis apply'd: And when we are said to be *by Nature Children of Wrath*, the Word (τεκνα) *Children* in its primary Sense has a peculiar Reference to *Birth*; and, tho' it is sometimes used in a laxer Signification, it has a Respect to being some way or other *born*; and as the Apostle varies the Word, and instead of that which he had used *ver.* 2, where he spoke of *Children* (υιοι) *of Disobedience*, substitutes another that relates to Persons being *born*, and says, as it lies in the Greek *were Children by Nature of Wrath*, he seems to have done it with a Design to strengthen the Force of the Term *by Nature*, as signifying, according to the *Hebrew*-Idiom, what we are in our *fallen State of Nature by Birth*.

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continued in a State of Nature, deserved, lay exposed unto, and were under a Law-sentence of the Wrath of God, which then *abode upon* us. (*John* iii. 36.) This was the Case of every one of us, *Jews*, as well as, and equally with the *Gentiles*; of the elect and called of God among both, as well as of others, there being no Difference *by Nature* between us and the rest of Mankind.

4 But God who is rich in Mercy, for his great Love wherewith he loved us,

4. But, O matchless, surprizing and affecting Grace! the infinitely holy and blessed God, instead of taking Vengeance upon us for all this, as was reasonably to be expected, has gone into a quite contrary Course, because he, who is *the Father of Mercies*, and *delights in Mercy*; (2 *Cor*. i. 3, and *Micah* vii. 18.) whose Riches of Mercy are most excellent and abundant, inexhaustible and overflowing, to pity, help and save sinful and miserable Creatures, and to enrich them with the Multitude of his Mercies; this God, without any Thing in us to induce him to it, has from all Eternity set his Love in a peculiar Manner upon us, whom he has chosen and called, designing therein to bless us with all spiritual Blessings in heavenly Places in Christ. (*Chap*. i. 3, 4.)

5 Even when we were dead in Sins, hath quickned us together with Christ (by Grace ye are saved)

5. In this wonderful Love, with which he of his own sovereign Will and good Pleasure has loved us, even when we *Jews*, as well as *Gentiles*, one as much as another, were in such forlorn, wretched and desperate Circumstances, as to be dead in Sin, and so helpless, hopeless and loathsome in our fallen State; He even then infused into us a Principle of spiritual Life, and recovered us to a State of Favour with himself, in which is Life, by Virtue of our Union with Christ, and in Conformity to him, and together with him. (See the Note *Chap*. i. 19, 20.) O astonishing Instance of the free Love of God †! and *that* particularly to those of the *Gentile*-Sort among you, that he should quicken you, and thereby deliver you, as well as us of the *Jews*, from all the Sin and Misery into which ye were so deeply plunged, and should bring you into a State of Favour with himself, and give you a Title to, the Beginnings and earnest, Fore-tastes and Securities of the Whole of that *Salvation, which is in Christ Jesus with eternal Glory*, (2 Tim. ii. 10.)

6 And hath raised us up together, and

6. And as God the Father raised up Christ to Glory, and set him at his own Right-hand in heavenly Places;

† As the Apostle was himself much affected with the Mercy of God to the *Gentiles*, and was gradually introducing his Design of particularly inlarging upon that Subject, which he most directly and professedly enters upon, *ver*. 11, and continues to the End of *Chap*. 3, that he might the more affect their Hearts with it; so in the Run of his Thoughts on the Riches of God's Grace in the whole of Salvation to all, that are made Partakers of it, he often intermingles Applications of it in a special Manner to the *Gentiles*, as he seems to do here: But, to shew that the Salvation of the *Jews* was also as intirely of Grace, he includes them, as like Objects of it, *ver*. 7, where he expresses it by the *exceeding Riches of his Grace, in his Kindness towards* us, *through Jesus Christ*, with Reference to all that had been said before about it, as equally extended to both Sorts of Believers.

made us *sit together in heavenly* Places *in Christ Jesus.*

so he has already raised us up, both *Jews* and *Gentiles* together, without Distinction, *in him*, as our Head and Representative §; and has already made us to sit together in the heavenly Mansions *in him*, who has taken Possession of them, as a Forerunner and publick Person for us; and so we are complete, though not in ourselves, yet representatively, as comprehended in him, who is our Covenant-head; and we are hereby assured that in due Time we shall certainly sit in heavenly Places in our own Persons together with Christ Jesus, with one another, and with all the Saints.

7 *That in the Ages to come he might shew the exceeding Riches of his Grace, in* his *Kindness towards us, through Christ Jesus.*

7. All which God has done to this very End and Purpose, that in all succeeding Ages of this World he might set forth an illustrious Pattern, Pledge and Earnest of the transcendent Excellence and super-abounding Fulness of his free Favour, which he will manifest under the Gospel-dispensation both to *Gentiles* and *Jews*, as it has been exemplified in Acts of special Goodness and endearing Kindness towards us of both Sorts, through the Person, Merit and Mediation of Jesus Christ our only Saviour, for the Encouragement of all Sorts of Sinners, *which shall hereafter believe on him to Life everlasting:* (1 Tim. i, 16.) And his further Design herein was, that he might for ever demonstrate and display the super-eminent Glory of his Grace in all its Fulness, and with the brightest Evidence in the World to come; when all its Riches in every imaginable Instance of his peculiar and distinguishing Friendship towards us, through Jesus Christ, will shine with the highest Lustre, and be laid out with the greatest Profusion upon us, together with all his Children, to make up the Glory and Blessedness of the heavenly State, which is coming on, to the Admiration, Joy and Praise of Saints and Angels through the endless Ages of Eternity.

8 *For by Grace are ye saved, through Faith; and that not of yourselves:* it is *the Gift of God:*

8. For, as I hinted above, (*v.* 5.) the Whole of your Salvation, who were *Gentiles*, as well as ours who were *Jews*, is from first to last, intirely a free and undeserved Gift; it is all owing merely to the Good-will and Favour of God, that any of you are interested in the several forementioned Blessings of a spiritual and eternal Salvation, which are conveyed to you through Faith, not by any Virtue in itself, but as the Means of God's own Appointment, whereby ye received Christ, and rested alone on

§ 'Tis the Observation of several judicious Divines, that the Apostle in the preceding Verse speaks of our being quicken'd *together with Christ*, but here of our being raised up together, and sitting in heavenly Places together *in Christ*, (ἐν Χριστῷ) which distinguishes our being *raised up*, &c. *in Christ*, from our being *quicken'd with him*; and shews that *quickning* relates to what is already done in, or upon us, and that *raising us up, and our sitting in heavenly Places* relates not to what is done *personally* in or upon us, but to what is done in *the Person of Christ*, as our Head and Representative, *for us*, and can't well be understood with tolerable Propriety in any other Sense.

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him for all Salvation, that the Honour of it may be reserved intirely to his Grace. (*Rom.* iv. 16.) And this Faith itself, as well as every other Benefit which is brought home and applied by it, is not the Product of any natural Principle in yourselves, not of your own good Dispositions, or of the Power of your own Free-will, or of any Improvement that ye were capable of making of the Gospel itself; but 'tis all the free Gift of God, who of his own sovereign Will and Pleasure graciously wrought it in you by the Power of his Spirit; ye having *believed through Grace*, (Acts xviii. 27.) and it being *given to you in the Behalf of Christ, to believe on him*, (Phil. i. 29.)

9 Not of Works, lest any Man should boast.

9. Neither the Salvation itself, nor the Faith whereby ye are made Partakers of it, is owing to any good Works done by you, as the meritorious or moving Cause of it: As there was certainly nothing of that kind to be found among the *Gentile*-Part of you, to induce the great and holy God to shew such high Favour to you, who in Violation of the Light and Law of Nature practised all abominable Iniquities; (*Rom.* i. 18—32) so there was nothing to engage God's Love and Kindness among the *Jewish* Part of you, who, in Contradiction to the clearer Light, and higher Obligations of supernatural Revelation, had shamefully perverted and transgressed the Law of *Moses* in numberless Instances: (See *Rom.* Chaps. 2 and 3.) But God has manifested his Grace in your respective Recovery from these guilty and deplorable Circumstances, that all Pretences might be equally cut off from one and the other of you, as if it were owing to any Works of Righteousness performed by you, (2 *Tim.* i. 9, and *Tit.* iii. 5) lest any one among you should be so vain-glorious, as to take a Share of that Honour to himself, which belongs to God alone, (1 *Cor.* i. 29, 30, 31) or should vaunt and glory in himself, as if he had done something to render him worthy of Mercy, (*Rom.* iii. 27, and iv. 2) which indeed in this wretched State of Things was absolutely impossible.

10 For we are his Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good Works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

10. For all of us, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, were so far from having done any Works spiritually good previous to our Conversion, that every thing of that Kind is *the Effect and Consequence*, and not *the Cause* of the Grace of God towards us, who, as Believers and Saints, to allude to the fine Composition of a *Poem*, (ποίημα) are a curious Piece of God's forming by a special Operation of his infinite Wisdom, as well as almighty Power, answerable to that, by which he at first brought forth the beautiful and harmonious Fabrick of this World out of a confused Chaos: We were thereby created anew in Christ Jesus, and by Virtue derived from him, as the Head of our Recovery, unto the bringing forth of all the good Works that are now found with us, which we were utterly incapable of before; but which God, in his eternal Scheme of Salvation chose us to, (*Chap.* i. 4) and which

which in the Counsels of his Will, and by a Work of preventing Grace, he prepared us for, (προητοίμασεν) that we, as new Creatures, might live in the Practice of them, and persevere therein to the End.

11 *Wherefore remember that ye* being *in Time past Gentiles in the Flesh, who are called Uncircumcision, by that which is called the Circumcision in the Flesh made by Hands;*

11. Now therefore, to apply this in a particular Manner to the *Gentile*-Converts among you, that ye may be kept humble, and deeply affected with all the amazing Grace which has been extended to you, I beseech you to call to Mind, and seriously reflect upon your former deplorable State and Condition, namely, that before Christ and the Gospel were made known to you, ye were idolatrous Heathens, wallowing in all the Defilements of apostate Nature, and destitute even of the Ordinance of Circumcision, which by God's Appointment was an external Sign and Token of a Covenant-Interest in him, and of the Renovation of the Heart, (*Gen.* xvii. 10, and *Deut.* xxx. 6) and was to the believing *Israelites*, *a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith*; (*Rom.* iv. 11) and ye not only were, but still are, spoken of in a Way of Contempt and Reproach by the carnal *Jews* *, as an uncircumcised People, that have nothing to do with God's gracious Covenant, or any of its Privileges or Means of Salvation: Ye are thus spoken of by those, that pride themselves in being deemed the circumcised People of God, as having that distinguishing Mark upon their Bodies, which was made by the Hands of Men, but which to the unbelieving *Jews* is only Circumcision in the Flesh, in Distinction from that which is wrought in the Heart, without human Hands, by the Holy Spirit. (*Col.* ii. 11.)

12 *That at that Time ye were without Christ, being Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and Strangers from the Covenants of Promise, having no Hope, and without God in the World:*

12. I intreat you to remember that all along, during your State of *Gentilism* and Unregeneracy, ye really were separate from Christ, (χωρις Χριςου) as having no Knowledge of, or Faith in, the only Saviour, or any vital Union or Communion with him, or any Claim to the Blessings of the Gospel, that are purchased, revealed and brought in by him: Ye also then were Foreigners to all the peculiar external Privileges, sacred as well as civil, that belong'd to the visible Church of the *Jews*, (Rom. ix. 4) and to all the internal special Blessings, that pertained to the true *Israelites* among them; ye having at that Time no Relation to them, or Union and Fellowship, or Right of Citizenship with them, as a religious, any more than a political Body; and so were far from God, and from all spiritual Life and Happiness: And ye were excluded, like Strangers, from the Pale of the Covenant of Grace, † which, in Opposition to the Covenant of

* *Uncircumcision* and *Circumcision* are here put for the *Uncircumcised* and the *Circumcised*, as they manifestly are in *Rom.* ii. 26. (See the Note there.)

† *Christ* was the great Promise of the Old Testament, as he was characteriz'd by the *Seed of the Woman*, and *the Seed of* Abraham, *of the Tribe of* Judah, *and of the Family of* David; and as all the other

of Works, conſiſts of many exceeding great and precious Promiſes, that were delivered with various Enlargements in the Publication of them at different Times, and all center'd in Chriſt and Salvation by him, in whom all Nations were to be bleſſed; *(Gen.* xxii. 18. and xxvi. 4.) and being in theſe miſerable, helpleſs and abandoned Circumſtances, ye neither had, nor could have any ſolid, rational, or well-grounded Hope of Deliverance from deſerved Wrath, much leſs of a glorious Reſurrection of the Body and an Inheritance of eternal Life; yea, with Reſpect to the Knowledge, Belief and Fear, Worſhip and Profeſſion of the only true God, ye really were *practical* and *ſpeculative* Atheiſts, (ἄθεοι) and lived, as ſuch, after the Courſe of this World, (*v.* 2.) and in all Parts of the Earth where-ever your Lot was caſt, and conſequently, ye then had no ſpiritual Communion with him or gracious Communications from him; ye neglecting him, and being neglected by him, while ye worſhipped and ſerved only them *that are by Nature no Gods*, (Gal. iv. 8.)

13 *But now in Chriſt Jeſus, ye who ſometimes were far off, are made nigh by the Blood of Chriſt.*

13. But now, unworthy as ye were, and unlikely to find Mercy, ye, through the aſtoniſhing Diſpenſation of divine Condeſcenſion and Grace, are brought into a ſpecial Relation and Union to Chriſt, the only Saviour, by Means of the Goſpel and through Faith in him; ſo that ye, who in the Days of your former Unregeneracy were in a periſhing State, far from God, *(Pſ.* lxxiii. 27.) and far from Chriſt, and from his Church and Covenant, and from all good Hope of Salvation, (*v.* 12.) are recovered to a State of Friendſhip with God, and of intimate Communion with him and with his Church, and to a humble Hope and Confidence in him, according to his Covenant, into which he has taken you, through the Merit and Application of the atoning Blood of Chriſt.

14. *For he is our Peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle Wall of Partition between us;*

14 For he is the great and only Peace-maker, Medium and Center of Union between God and us and one another, whether we be believing *Jews* or *Gentiles:* And our Reconciliation to God and each other, after all the Variance that has been between him and us, and between us among ourſelves, is brought about alone by him, who has unwea-

other Promiſes of the Covenant of Grace were ſumm'd up and center'd in this, they are ſpoken of here, and *Acts* ii. 39, and vii. 17, and xiii. 32, and xxvi. 6, 7, and *Rom.* iv. 14, 16, and *Gal.* iii. 17, 19, 22, 29, in the *ſingular* Number, as if they were but one Promiſe: But as this Promiſe was iſſued out under various Editions and Enlargements at ſeveral Periods, *viz.* to *Abraham*, and to him and his Seed, and after the giving of the Law, it is called here and *Rom.* ix. 4. (ſee the Note there) in the *plural* Number *the Covenants*, tho' for Subſtance it was one and the ſame Covenant, which conſiſted of many Promiſes, or was all made up of free and gracious Promiſes, in Oppoſition to the Covenant of Works; and, among others, that Covenant of Promiſe which was made with *Abraham*, and had the Sign of Circumciſion annexed to it, is by no Means to be excluded, but ſeems rather to be particularly referred to, becauſe the Apoſtle had juſt before been ſpeaking of *Circumciſion*, which was a peculiar Privilege of the Church of *Iſrael*, and the external Token of their viſible Covenant-Relation to God, in which the *Gentiles* formerly had no Share or Intereſt.

the Believers of both these two grand Divisions of People into one Church or Fold under himself, as their great Shepherd, (*John* x. 16.) and has cemented them together in Heart and Affection, as one Family, or mystical Body, that are Partakers of the same Privileges by the Gospel: (*Gal.* iii. 28, 29.) And as there was a Wall of Separation in the Temple, under the Old Testament-œconomy, between the Court of *Israel* and the Court of the *Gentiles*, which admitted the former to, and excluded the latter from, a near Access to God in the holy Place; and as this Wall was emblematical of the ceremonial Law, which kept the *Jews* and *Gentiles* at a Distance from each other, and the *Gentiles* at a Distance from God, Christ has now demolished or taken away that, and every other Mark of Distinction and Distance between us, who were of different Nations, by introducing a better and more extensive Dispensation of Grace, wherein believing *Gentiles* are allowed to make as near Access to God, and to be Partakers of all the Privileges of his Sanctuary, (which was typical of the Gospel-church) as fully as the believing *Jews*.

15 *Having abolished in his Flesh the Enmity*, even *the Law of Commandments*, contained *in Ordinances*, *for to make in himself of twain*, *one new Man*, so *making Peace*;

15. He has done this, as having by his Crucifixion in the Flesh (*v.* 16.) fulfilled, and so put an End to, vacated and disanulled the Force, and taken away the Obligation of any longer observing that ||, which had eventually proved the Occasion and Cause of the most inveterate Animosity and Hatred, Opposition and Contention, with regard both to spiritual and temporal Concerns, between the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, even the ceremonial Law, which was a System of positive Precepts, consisting of abundance of ritual Institutions, that in themselves were of an indifferent Nature, and were obligatory to the *Jews*, only by Virtue of a divine Command. Christ, I say, has abolished these by his Death, to the end that, as the great Head, in whom all Things were to be gathered in one, (*Chap.* i. 10.) he might unite both these distant Parties to each other; and that he might make out of both one Church, formed, as new Creatures, according to the Image of God by the

|| *The Enmity* here signifies the *Cause* of Enmity by a usual Metonymy, which puts *the Effect* for *the Cause*, in like Manner as *Christ*, who is the procuring Cause, the Author, the Maker and Giver of Peace, was called in the preceding Verse *our Peace*; and so by *the Enmity* is meant *the ceremonial Law*, which was as a Wall of Separation between *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and in the next Words is stiled *the Law of Commandments contained in Ordinances*, by way of Distinction from *the moral Law*, that great Rule of Righteousness, which, as such, neither was, nor can be abolished, as the Apostle saies this Law is. And in the parallel Epistle to the *Colossians* (Chap. ii. 14, 16, 17) this ceremonial Law is called the *Hand-writing of Ordinances*, so far as they related to *Meats and Drinks*, *New-Moons and Holy Daies*, which were a *Shadow of Things to come, the Body of which is Christ*. And this was the Law, that occasion'd the most bitter Enmity between the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as it was zealously contended for by one, and violently opposed by the other, and kept up such a Distinction and Difference between them, as made them refuse the Offices of common Civility to each other, which was carried to such a Height of Uncharitableness among the carnal *Jews* against the poor *Gentiles*, as even to *forbid the Apostles to speak to the* Gentiles *that they might be saved*. 1 Thess. ii. 16.

renewing of the Holy-Ghost, and framed together for Gospel-worship and new Obedience, and equally Partakers, by a new Constitution under him, of all the Blessings that pertain to the Kingdom of Grace in this World, and Kingdom of Glory in that which is to come. In this Manner he has brought about an intire Harmony and Friendship between Believers of all Nations among themselves, as one spiritual Body, they being united by Faith and Love to him, and to one another in and through him.

16 *And that he might reconcile both unto God in one Body by the Cross, having slain the Enmity thereby:*

16. And that he might not only bring *Jews* and *Gentiles* into a State of spiritual and holy Friendship and Communion one with another; but might likewise make up the great Controversy that lay between God and each of these Parties, on Account of their Transgressions of the Law, which they respectively were under, and might bring Believers of both Sorts, without any further Distinction of Nations, into a State of Peace and Favour with God in one Church, or mystical Body, of which Christ is the Head §, he has reconciled them to him by Virtue of his Sufferings on the Cross, *when his Ownself bore our Sins in his own Body on the Tree*; *and once suffered for Sins, the Just for the Unjust, that he might bring us to God*; (1 Pet. ii. 24, and iii. 18.) he having thereby not only taken away the Ground of Enmity, that had so long subsisted between *Jews* and *Gentiles*, by abolishing the ceremonial Law, but having also *taken away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself*, which had made the Breach between *God* and *them* severally, and had cast him and them into a State of Enmity to each other.

17 *And he came, and preached Peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.*

17. And in Pursuit of this great and blessed Design, that it might be effectual to both these Parties of Men, he came in the Ministry of his Servants after his Ascension to Heaven, and by the powerful Operation of his Spirit, and published the Glad-tidings of restored Peace and Friendship to those of you, that were *Gentiles* in a State of Nature, and as such were far from God, and Christ, and the Covenant of Promises, and far from any good Hope toward God, and from a State of Favour with him; (*v.* 12.) And he made this preaching of the Gospel effectual to the Salvation of those Believers * of the *Jewish* Nation, who had the Gospel of

§ *In one Body* may relate either to Christ's *mystical Body, the Church*, of which he is Head, as 'tis stiled *Col* i. 18; with regard to which 'tis said of all Believers, that *being many, they are one Body in Christ, and every one Members one of another*; (Rom. xii. 5) or it may relate to *the natural Body of Christ*, with Regard to which 'tis said, (*Col.* i. 21, 22) *ye that were some Time alienated, and Enemies in your Minds by wicked Works, yet now has he reconciled in the Body of his Flesh through Death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his Sight.* And as the Epistle to the *Colossians* is similar to this, and casts great Light upon it, we are naturally led to take in both these Senses.

* *By them that were afar off* is undoubtedly meant the *Gentiles* before their Conversion, as they had been described under this Character, *ver.* 12, 13; and, in Opposition to these, *by them that were nigh* is not meant them, that *were made nigh by the Blood of Christ*, as the Apostle had spoke of the Believing *Gentiles*, ver. 13; but 'tis meant of the *Jewish Nation*, who on account of their external Relation to God, as his visible Church, were said to be *a People near to him*. (Pf. cxlviii. 14.) Now accord-

of Peace preached to them; and so, without Distinction of Nations, he has brought some of both Sorts into a State of Peace and Friendship with God and one another, they being all one in Christ without any Difference.

18 *For through him we both have Access by one Spirit unto the Father.*

18. For such is the Efficacy of Christ's Death, and of his Gospel, attended with the Power of his Spirit, toward Sinners of all Nations, that in his Name and thro' his Mediation, who speaks of himself as *the Door* of Entrance, and *the Way to* the Father, (*John* x. 9. and xiv. 6.) all of us, whether we be believing *Jews* or *Gentiles*, have equal Liberty of drawing nigh to God, and coming to him by Faith in Prayer, and in every other sacred Ordinance, and are introduced like Favourites into his gracious Presence, that we may freely pour out our Hearts before him, and offer up our Addresses to him with humble Confidence of being heard and answer'd; and so, according to the Scheme of Gospel-worship, answerable to the Oeconomy of Salvation, we have this comfortable Access into the holiest through the Blood of Jesus, (*Heb.* x. 19.) by the Guidance, Aid and Assistance of one and the same Spirit, who is given to true Believers of both Sorts, as the Spirit of Grace and Supplication, and the Spirit of Adoption, to encourage and enable us to come to God the Father, as the Father of our Lord Jesus, and as our reconciled God and Father in him, (*Rom.* viii. 15.)

19 *Now therefore ye are no more Strangers and Foreigners, but Fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the Houshold of God.*

19. Now therefore, ye *Gentile*-believers, being reconciled and brought nigh to God, are no longer Strangers to him and his Covenant of Promises, nor Aliens from the Commonwealth of *Israel*, and from the Privileges of their Church-state, as ye formerly were; (*v.* 12.) but, like Freemen and Fellow-citizens of the heavenly *Jerusalem*, ye are now entitled to, and made joint Partakers with the believing *Jews*, of all the Blessings that pertain to the Inheritance of the Saints; and not only so, but ye are brought into a near Relation to God, as Domesticks that dwell in his House, and are employed in his Service under his special Care, and as Children of your heavenly Father, by Regeneration and Adoption, and consequently *Heirs of God through Christ:* (Rom. viii. 17. and *Gal.* iv. 7.)

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cording to that antient Prophecy, *Is.* lvii. 19, where God says, *I create* the Fruit of the Lips *Peace, Peace to him that is afar off, and to him that is near*, Christ in his *personal* Ministry came to the *Jews*, who by reason of their visible Relation to him, as the God and King of *Israel*, are called *his own, to whom he came, and his own received him not:* (John i. 11.) And his being most immediately *sent to the lost Sheep of the House of* Israel, (*Mat.* xv. 24) his personal Ministry was chiefly confined to them. But as the Apostles and others of his Servants preached by his Commission, and in his Name and Stead, as Ambassadors for him, 2 *Cor.* v. 18, 19, 20; so he may be said to have preached to *Jews* and *Gentiles* by them, in like Manner as he is said to have preached by his Spirit to the Old World in the Ministry of *Noah*, 1 Peter iii. 19: This is what our Apostle calls *Christ's speaking in him*, 2 *Cor.* xiii. 3; And this I take to be principally intended in the Words before us.

20. *And are built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner*-stone.

20. And ye are still more closely united to Christ, and to God in him, not only as Citizens to their Sovereign, and as Children to their Father; but as a Building to its Foundation, which is another Figure under which the Church of Christ may be considered in its Relation to him, (1 *Pet.* ii. 4, 5.) who is a sure Foundation, which God himself has laid in *Sion*, besides which no Man can lay any other, but which is ministerially laid both by my preaching, (1 *Cor.* iii. 10, 11.) and by the Doctrine of the twelve Apostles, as Master-builders, under Christ, in the New Testament-dispensation; (*Rev.* xxi. 14.) as it also has been in the Writings of the antient Prophets, (*Ps.* cxviii. 22. and *Isa.* xxviii. 16.) which testify'd of Christ, (*John* v. 39.) The Doctrine of all these is for Substance the same, with regard to eternal Life and Salvation by Jesus Christ, who is not only the Rock, on which he has built his Church; (*Matt.* xvi. 18.) but is also the principal Corner-stone, which unites, holds and binds together both believing *Jews* and *Gentiles* in himself as one Church, and gives Strength, Solidity and Beauty to the whole spiritual Edifice that is erected upon him †.

21 *In whom all the Building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy Temple in the Lord:*

21. In Union with whom, and by Virtue derived from him, the whole Fabrick of the universal Church, consisting of believing *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and every Member of it, being placed in proper Order for the Use of the Whole, rises up like a great Pile of living Materials into a spiritual Building, by a continual Addition of new Converts, and by a further Growth of each of them, which are animated and influenced by their living Foundation, unto the compleating of a sacred Temple; not like that of Stones, which God ordered to be built at *Jerusalem*, and was typical of this: But a Temple of a spiritual Nature, even his Church, which is formed by and for Christ, and is dedicated to him, and inhabited by him, who is *the Lord of his own House*, (Heb. iii. 6.) in which he manifests his gracious Presence, displays his Glory, and is worshipped and glorified.

22 *In whom ye also are builded together for an Habitation of God through the Spirit.*

22. In whom, as vitally united to him, and framed into the Order of the Gospel by his Authority and Influence, and in his Name, ye also, as a particular Church made up of *Gentile* and *Jewish* Believers, are built together, without Difference of Privileges and Benefits, as a living Temple, which God has consecrated for himself, and

† *The Heads* of *Israel* that bore the Weight of Government, and were their Glory, are called the *Chief*, and the *Stay*, or as 'tis in the *Hebrew* (פנות) *the Corners of the People*, (1 Sam. xiv. 38, and Is. xix. 13.) accordingly Christ is called the *chief Corner-Stone*, and *the Head-Stone of the Corner*, Ps. cxviii. 22; because the Church depends as intirely upon him, as its *Foundation*, when consider'd in Allusion to a House or Building, as it does upon him, as its *Head*, when consider'd in Allusion to a natural and political Body. (Vid. *Bez.* in Loc.)

resides in, as he also doth in the Heart of every true Believer, by the special Presence, Light and Grace of his holy Spirit, *who dwells in you, and shall be in you*, (John xiv. 17.) till ye be received up to himself in Glory.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How deplorable is our State by the Fall! We were dead in Trespasses and Sins; Children of Wrath by Nature, and of Disobedience by Practice; and strongly addicted to a Gratification of all abominable Appetites of the Soul and Body, according to the evil Customs of this World, under the Power and Influence of Satan, who rules and works in us by our own free Consent. But how amazing is the Grace of God, in recovering Sinners of these Characters from this hideous State! He is rich in Mercy toward them, through Jesus Christ, in the Greatness of his Love, with which he has loved a chosen People among them, and which he manifests with indearing Kindness in all the Ages of Time, and to an endless Eternity: He quickens them from their Death in Sin to a Life of Righteousness, by Virtue of, and in Conformity to their risen Saviour; and highly advances them in him, as their Head, in whom they, tho' not personally, yet *representatively* are already raised up, and made to sit together in the Mansions of heavenly Glory, till they shall actually in their own Persons sit down there with him: And he has shewn the exceeding Riches of his Grace to former Converts, even among *Gentile*-Sinners, as Patterns and Earnests of what he design'd to do in succeeding Generations, through Jesus Christ, for all that shall, through Grace, believe in him after their Example. Behold God's Way of saving Sinners! 'Tis not by any Works of their own, lest they should take the Glory of it to themselves; but merely by his own Grace thro' Faith in Christ Jesus; and this Faith is not wrought in them for any Worthiness, or by any Power of their own; but is the free Gift of God, whose curious Workmanship they are, by a new Creation in Christ unto good Works, according to his eternal Appointment, that they should practise and persevere in them. How humble should we be in Reflection upon what we were by Nature, as without Christ and all the Blessings of the new Covenant, without God or any good Hope towards him; and in a perishing State, as Strangers far from him. But how should we of the believing *Gentiles*, as well as believing *Jews*, rejoice and bless God for what we are made to be in Christ, through Faith in him! All Obstructions to our Reconciliation with them, and to a Reconciliation of both with God as one Body, are now remov'd; we are brought nigh, into a State of Peace with God, by the Blood of Christ's Cross, and have free Liberty of Access to the Father by one Spirit through him; are Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Family of God, equal Partakers of all those Privileges and Blessings by means of the Gospel, which Christ himself may still be said to preach to us by the Ministry of his Servants: And we are built on him as the only Foundation, which is laid in the inspired Writings of the Apostles and Prophets; and are built up together as his Church, for a Habitation of God through the Spirit, till we come to dwell in his immediate blissful Presence for ever.

CHAP. III.

The Apostle sets forth the Dignity of his Office in its Relation to the Gentiles, *for which he suffered Imprisonment*, 1—2. *His Qualifications for it*, 3—6. *His Call to it, together with the noble Purposes that were answered by it*, 7—12. *He offers up a most excellent and comprehensive Prayer for the* Ephesians, 13—19. *And concludes with a grand and suitable Doxology*, 20, 21.

TEXT.

TEXT.	PARAPHRASE.
1 *FOR this Cause, I Paul, the Prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles;*	1. ON Account of my asserting and maintaining that the believing *Gentiles* are now *no more Strangers and Foreigners, but Fellow-citizens with the Saints,* &c. (*Chap* ii. 19, *&c.* *) I *Paul*, am at this very Time suffering Bonds and Imprisonment at *Rome*, through the implacable Malice, and indefatigable Opposition of the carnal *Jews*, who have brought me under this Confinement; and they are especially exasperated against me, as they were at *Ephesus*, (Acts xxi. 27—33.) for my Faithfulness and Zeal in preaching to you and other *Gentiles*, the Doctrine of Justification alone through Faith in Christ, without the Deeds of the Law; (*Acts* xxii. 21, 22. and xxvi. 17—21.) under which Consideration of my Sufferings, I glory in them: And ye cannot reasonably doubt, but that I undergo them on your Account, and for your spiritual Advantage;
2 *If ye have heard of the Dispensation of the Grace of God, which is given to me to you-ward:*	2. Since † ye must needs have heard of the divine Commission, which was freely given to me, as a Steward in Christ's House and Kingdom, to go to the *Gentiles*, (*Acts* ix. 15. and xxii. 21, and xxvi. 17, 18.) and to dispense the Gospel of the Grace of God chiefly to you, and others of that Character, which I have accordingly done for many Years, where-ever I came, that by Means thereof ye might believe and be saved.
3 *How that by Revelation he made known unto me the Mystery (as I wrote afore in few Words,*	3. It is evident from what ye have heard of this, that, to fit and qualify me for so important a Service, the Lord Jesus has discovered to me, by the immediate Inspiration of his Spirit, (*v.* 5.) and by repeated Visions and Revelations, (*Acts* xxvi. 16, 17. 2 *Cor.* xii. 1, 7.) the great Mystery of the Gospel concerning Salvation alone through him; as God manifested in the Flesh, and the calling of the *Gentiles*; which is indeed a Matter of stupendious Wisdom and Sovereignty, Condescension and Grace, surpassing all our Thoughts, (*v.* 19.) according to what I have (ἐν ὀλίγῳ) briefly said a little before in this Epistle about it, (*Chaps.* i, ii.)

* Some Expositors, to make out *the Connection* of this Verse, consider all that follows it, 'till we come to the 14th Verse as a Parenthesis, and join *this* and *that* together, where the Words *for this Cause* are resumed in the Apostle's Prayer for the *Ephesians*. But if in the first Verse we only supply the Verb *am*, which is often defective in the *Greek*, and read it with *Erasmus*, *Beza*, and many others, *For this Cause I Paul am the Prisoner of Jesus Christ for you* Gentiles, its Connection stands obvious and easy, both with the latter Part of the preceding Chapter, and the Verses that immediately follow it.

† The Particle (εἴγε) *it* may be consider'd, not as a Particle of *doubting*, but of *Affirmation*; and so may be render'd *inasmuch as*, or *since*, or *seeing that*, as the like Particle (ἐὰν) signifies, when our Lord said, *If* or *as surely as, I go and prepare a Place for you, I will come again*, &c. John xiv. 3. and so no Argument can be drawn from hence, that the Apostle had not preach'd at *Ephesus*. (See Dr. *Whitby* on the Place.)

4. By

4 *Whereby when ye read ye may understand my Knowledge in the Mystery of Christ)*

4. By which, when ye review and reflect upon it, and compare it with what I am going still further to advance, ye may clearly perceive, that the Knowledge of this profound and astonishing Mystery has been revealed to me by Jesus Christ, and that I am fully acquainted with it, as it relates to his unsearchable Riches, (*v.* 8) that are preached, and distibuted even among the *Gentiles*.

5 *Which in other Ages was not made known unto the Sons of Men, as it is now revealed unto his holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit.*

5. Which Mystery in the former Ages of the Church, before the Law, and under the Law, was not made known to the *Gentiles* at all; nor so fully, distinctly and plainly revealed, especially in many of its glorious Circumstances, to any of the human Race; no, not any of the most eminent of God's Favourites under former Dispensations, (*Matt.* xiii. 17.) * as it is now manifested in a supernatural Way to the Apostles of our Lord, whom he has sanctified that they may be holy in Heart and Life, and has set a-part for his Service; and to the New Testament extraordinary Prophets, by the immediate Inspiration of his Spirit, in consequence of his Ascension to Heaven, *that he might fill all Things*, (Chap. iv. 10, 11.)

6 *That the Gentiles should be Fellow-heirs, and of the same Body, and Partakers of his Promise in Christ, by the Gospel:*

6. The Mystery which I have chiefly in mine Eye is, that even the *idolatrous Gentiles* (Chap. ii. 12) should not only be admitted to some Share of Advantage under the expected Messiah; but should, together with the Believing *Jews*, be Fellow-Citizens and Joint-Heirs of the heavenly Inheritance with them, through the Faith of Christ, as if they had been the natural Seed of *Abraham*; (Gal. iii. 29) and that they should be incorporated with them into the same Church, to partake of all its Privileges equally with themselves, and be Members of the same mystical Body of Christ, to derive all enlightning, quickning, sanctifying and comforting Influence from him, and hold their Right and Claim to all the Blessings of the new Covenant under him, as their Head; and that they, in as full a Manner as any of the *Jews*, should be interested in the whole Covenant of

* The Gospel had been indeed preached unto *Abraham*, and the Calling of the *Gentiles* had been revealed in many antient Promises and Prophecies of the Old Testament, as in *Gen.* xxii. 18, and xlix. 10, *Ps.* ii. 8, and *Is.* xi. 10, and xlix. 6. But *in what Manner, by what Means*, and *at what Time*, this Salvation should be accomplished, and extended to them, and *that* as they should be one Body and Fellow-Heirs with the believing *Jews*, was little known or understood; and notwithstanding the plain Declarations of our Lord himself about it, (*John* x. 16, and xii. 20—33) and his express Commission and Promise to his Disciples relating to it, *Mat.* xxviii. 19, 20, and *Mark* xvi. 15, 16; yet some of the Apostles themselves, as well as other converted *Jews*, were surpriz'd and shock'd at the Thought of the *Gentiles* being made equal Partakers of the Blessings of the Gospel with themselves, and *that* without their being circumcised, and observing the Law of *Moses*, as appears from the Scruples that *Peter* made about going in to the *Gentiles*, and the Astonishment of the *Jews* at their receiving the Holy Ghost, *Acts* Chap. x, and from the Debates that arose in the Council at *Jerusalem*, upon *Paul* and *Barnabas*'s reporting the Conversion of the *Gentiles* by their Ministry, *Acts* xv. 1—29. These, and such like, were the Things that were not known before, as they were now revealed to the holy Apostles and Prophets, which is meant not of the *Old Testament* Prophets, but of the inspired Prophets of the New Testament, such as are mention'd *Chap.* iv. 11, and 1 *Cor.* xiv. 29—32: For what *was now revealed to them* is here spoken of, in Opposition to what *was not made known in former Ages*.

Promises, inclusive of all its spiritual and eternal Benefits; and particularly that the great Promise of the New Testament, even the Holy Ghost, that eminent Promise of the Father, (*Acts* i. 4) should be fulfilled unto them, and they should be made Partakers of his Gifts and saving Graces, as he is shed upon them abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, in virtue of his Purchase for them, and of their Union with him, *in whom all the Promises of God are Yea, and Amen*; (Tit. iii. 6, and 2 *Cor*. i. 20) and so the *Blessing of* Abraham, in its utmost Extent, should *come on the* Gentiles *through Jesus Christ*, that they, as well as *Jews*, *might receive the Promise of the Spirit through Faith*, (Gal. iii. 14) by means of the Gospel, which is now preached unto them.

7 Whereof I was made a Minister, according to the Gift of the Grace of God given unto me, by the effectual working of his Power.

7. Of which Gospel I have the Honour of being ordain'd and call'd to be a Preacher and an Apostle, that I might publish it in all its Light, Fulness and Glory, and in its widest Extent to *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*. I did not thrust myself into this high Office, or take this Honour to myself; no, nor did I *receive it of Man*, or by the Hands of any Man whatsoever; (*Gal*. i. 1) but I came into it by the immediate Authority of Jesus Christ himself, and of God the Father who raised him from the Dead, according to the free Gift or Grace of the Apostleship, * which God of his own mere Favour conferr'd upon me, in that he not only converted me, but likewise led me into the deepest Mysteries of the Gospel; and so furnished me for, and called me to this honourable Office, which he made effectual by the mighty Operation both of his miraculous and saving Power in and by me, to the Benefit of my own Soul, and of Multitudes of others, especially among the *Gentiles*. (Gal. ii. 18.)

8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all Saints, is this Grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable Riches of Christ;

8. Unto me in a peculiar Manner, who, while I magnify my Office, and extol the Riches of divine Grace toward me, and toward *Gentile*-Sinners, can't tell how to think and speak meanly enough of myself, and want Words sufficiently to express the humbling Sense I have of my own Unworthiness †. Unto me, who really am, and unfeignedly account myself, unworthy to be number'd among the Saints, when I consider what an inveterate Enemy and injurious violent Persecuter of Christ, his People and Cause, I formerly was, and should have continued to be to this very

* As in ver. 2. *the Gospel* is called *the Grace of God*, which it also is *Tit*. ii. 11, because it is the Gift of his free Favour, and discovers the Grace that is in his Heart, and that he has provided in Christ for Sinners, and because it is the Means of his conveying Grace to them; so here the Apostleship seems, for like Reasons, to be meant by what the Apostle calls *the Grace of God given to him*; for the following Words shew that he had herein a peculiar Respect to the Grace, which called him to, and endowed him with Gifts for the Apostolic Office; and this at other Times he speaks of as *the Grace*, and *the Grace of God that was given to him*. (Rom. xv. 16, and Gal. ii. 9.)

† Here are the noblest Strains of flowing Eloquence to paint out the exceeding low Opinion the Apostle had of himself, and his exalted Thoughts of Christ, and of the Fulness of the excellent Blessings, that are treasured up in him, and diffused abroad by him. He seems to stretch the Powers of Language to set himself as low, and the Riches of the Grace of Christ as high, as possible.

Day,

Day, had I been left to the chosen Way of my own Heart; yea, in Reflection on these detestable Things, I think of myself as the meanest, ai, far below the very meanest of all that are truly sanctified, (which blessed be God is now my Case) and as *not meet to be called an Apostle*: (1 Cor. xv. 9) Even unto such a worthless, undeserving, hell-deserving Wretch as myself, this astonishing, matchless, condescending Favour is shown, that I, above all the rest of the Apostles, should be pitched upon, and employed to publish among the poor idolatrous *Gentiles* the Glad-tidings of Salvation, and to be instrumental, in the Hand of the Spirit, of making known, and conveying to Multitudes of them, those exceeding Riches of Mercy and Merit, of Grace and Glory, that are treasured up in Christ, and proposed in the Gospel, by and through him, to the worst of Sinners, even among *them*; and Riches that can never be fathomed or exhausted, told over or traced out (ἀνεξιχνίαστον) in all their endless Variety, Excellence and Fulness.

9 *And to make all* Men *see, what* is *the Fellowship of the Mystery, which from the Beginning of the World hath been hid in God, who created all Things by Jesus Christ:*

9. And the great Design of God, in honouring me with this Commission, was to enlighten all Sorts of Men among *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, by Means of my Ministry, that they might clearly perceive what a happy Communion Believers of all Nations have in the exceeding great and glorious Blessings of the Gospel, as they are one Church or Body under Christ their Head; which may very properly be stiled a *Mystery*, not only because of the unfathomable Depth of God's Sovereignty, Wisdom and Grace therein, but because it lay concealed as an intire Secret in his eternal Counsel and Purpose (*v.* 11. and *Chap.* i. 11.) before all Ages, and has under all former Dispensations, ever since the Beginning of this World, been suggested only in some general Hints, while the whole Scheme, as it is now revealed by the Gospel, was still reserved with impenetrable Concealment in the Mind of God himself, who created all Things, from the highest to the lowest of them, by Jesus Christ, the Father therein acting by, and together with his Son; so that *without him was not any Thing made that was made*, (John i. 2, 3. Col. i. 16. and Heb. i. 2.)

10 *To the Intent that now unto the Principalities and Powers in heavenly* Places *might be known by the Church the manifold Wisdom of God,*

10. This glorious Revelation is also now made, to the End and Purpose that all the Ranks and Orders of the angelic Nature, which may be called *Principalities and Powers in heavenly Places*, because they *excel in Strength*, (Psal. ciii. 20.) and are employed as *ministring Spirits to the Heirs of Salvation* (Heb. i. 14.) in this lower World, though their ordinary Residence be in Heaven. (See the Note on *Chap.* i. 21.) This Discovery, I say, is now made, that they, who desire to look into those Things, (1 *Pet.* i. 12.) might behold, and contemplate with Joy and praise, the adorable Wisdom of God, which now shines forth in numberless Displays of various Glories, as exhibited in the Doctrines

and Ministrations, Blessings and Privileges of the New Testament Church.

11 According to the eternal Purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

11. All which is now done exactly agreeable to God's eternal Pre-ordination, or *Purpose in himself*, (Chap. i. 9.*) which he formed with a gracious Regard to his Church, as considered in Christ their Head, even our Saviour and Lord, and which he intended in due Time to execute just after the Manner, in which he has now brought it to pass by him, (*Rom.* viii. 28. and 1 *Pet.* i. 20, 21.)

12 In whom we have Boldness and Access with Confidence by the Faith of him.

12. In and through whom, as the only Mediator between God and Man, we have great Liberty and Enlargement of Spirit in our Transactions with God, as our reconciled God, Father and Friend, and make near Approaches to him on a Throne of Grace in our solemn Acts of Worship, and in the delightful Communion which he admits us to, and *that* with humble Assurance, as to his Favour towards us, and our Acceptance in his Sight, and as to the Audience of our Prayers for Things agreeable to his Will, and our final Salvation; which holy Confidence results from, and is produced in us by the Faith, which Christ is the Author of, and which terminates immediately upon him, in a firm Dependence on what he has done and suffered for us, and in a fiducial Commitment of ourselves and all our Concerns to him, who *is in us our Hope of Glory*, (Col. i. 27.)

13 Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my Tribulations for you, which is your Glory.

13. In Reflection therefore on all these Things, I earnestly intreat you to labour, by divine Grace, not to be disheartened, (μη εκκακειν) or any Way frightned into Negligence or Despondency in your Christian-Course and Profession, by Reason of the Sufferings, which I endure, not for any Evil done by me, but merely in the Cause of Christ, for the Sake of my preaching the Gospel to you *Gentiles*; (v. 1.) but I beg that ye may rather be encouraged, strengthned and animated in his Ways by them, which are really a peculiar Honour put upon you, as well as me, inasmuch as Christ has not only sent me to publish the Glad-tidings of Salvation, but has likewise called me to Sufferings on that Account, in Confirmation of the Truth of the Doctrines, which I preached unto you, and by Means of which ye were brought to believe in him †. And this will be indeed your Glory, if ye are so far from being dismayed or offended at my Tribulations, as to be so much the more established in your Faith by them.

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* The Word here render'd *Purpose* (προθεσιν) is in the New Testament always, except in the Case of the *Shew-bread*, (Heb. ix. 2) translated *Purpose*, and signifies an *internal* Act of the Will or Mind; but I don't find that 'tis ever used for disposing by *external* Operations or Events; and therefore I take it here, as usual elsewhere, to relate to the *original Purpose* of God *before the World*, (προ των αιωνων) as it is expressed 1 *Cor.* ii. 7.

† *Beza* observes upon this Place, that the Church is *water'd* by the Blood of Martyrs, but is only *washed* by the Blood of Christ.

14. For

14 For this Cause I bow my Knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

14. For this Reason, I in the most humble, reverential and solemn Addresses on my bended Knees, recommend you to the Grace of the eternal and Covenant-Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is also our Covenant-Father and Friend in him.

15 Of whom the whole Family in Heaven and Earth is named,

15. Of whom, and of the Father through him, the whole Body of true Worshippers, which make but one Family, consisting of all the Saints together with the Angels in Heaven §, and of all Believers in every Place and Nation upon Earth, as being gathered together under Christ their Head, have received a much more excellent Name than that of the Children of *Abraham*, in which the carnal *Jews* vainly boast; they have the Title, Honour and Advantage of being *called the Children of God*, as high Favourites, nearly related to him, owning and loving him, and being owned and beloved by him, and living in their Father's House.

16 That he would grant you according to the Riches of his Glory, to be strengthened with Might by his Spirit in the inner Man.

16. My Prayer to this great and blessed God, who has done so much for you already, is, that in a Way and Manner like his infinite self, answerable to his own immense Fulness of Wisdom, Faithfulness and Power, Goodness, Mercy and Grace, which is his Glory, and in the Enjoyment of which the most glorious Riches consist, My Prayer, I say, is, that he would please in his free Favour, and inexhaustible Liberality, to grant unto you that ye may be, yet more and more, fortified against all the Corruptions of your own Hearts, and the Temptations of Satan and of this evil World; may be invigorated for, and in, every Duty and Service; may be animated with holy Courage to do and suffer the whole Will of God; and may be enabled to exercise every Grace, and abound in all Comfort and Holiness, and to hold on your Way, and hold out to the End, thro' all Opposition and Danger, by the powerful Operation and Assistance of the divine Spirit, who, according to his peculiar Province in the œconomy of Salvation, carries on and perfects, as well as begins his good Work in the renewed Soul, which is the best and inmost Part of the Man. (See the Note on *Rom.* vii. 22.)

17 That Christ may dwell in your Hearts by Faith; that ye being rooted and grounded in Love.

17. I further humbly and earnestly beseech him, that Christ, together with, and by his Spirit, may be constantly present to your Minds in realizing and appropriating Acts of Faith, whereby he is received and entertained in the Soul; and may have a sensible Abode in your Hearts, by continual gracious Impressions and delightful Manifestations of his

§ *Of whom*, by the Construction may refer either to *our Lord Jesus Christ*, who is the next immediate Antecedent, and gives Power to Believers to become the Sons of God; (*John* i. 12) or may refer to *God the Father*, who is the principal Subject of the foregoing Sentence, and makes Believers his Sons. (2 *Cor.* vi. 18, and 1 *John* iii 1.) The *Jews* commonly speak of the *Angels* as *God's Family in Heaven*, and of *Men*, especially of his Covenant-People, as *his Family on Earth*: (See Dr. *Whitby* on the Place) And, supposing the Apostle to allude to this, the Angels must be at least included in *the Family*, which he here speaks of. (See the Note on *Chap*. i. 10.)

Love to you, as those that are united by Faith and Love to him; that so, like Trees well rooted and settled in a good Soil, ye may be deeply fix'd, and firmly establish'd in an experimental and assuring Knowledge of his matchless and endearing Love to you, and in the best Returns of stedfast and ardent Love to him again, and to the Father through him, and to all his Children for his sake, *because he first loved you.* (1 John iv. 19.)

18 *May be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the Breadth, and Length, and Depth, and Height;*

18. And I humbly beg of God, that being thus rooted and grounded in Love, ye may be enabled, as far as the human Mind can reach, under the utmost Advantage of divine Revelation, Faith and Experience, and of the enlightning and sanctifying Influences of the Spirit, to apprehend, (καταλαβέσθαι) and be suitably affected with, the immense Love of Christ, that ye may conceive, as clearly as possible, what is the unmeasurable Extent of it, as it reaches to the *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, to all Ranks and Degrees of Sinners, and to all Manner of spiritual and heavenly Blessings, according as God has chosen you to them in him: (*Chap.* i. 3, 4) And what is its unbeginning and endless Length, as it is from Everlasting to Everlasting: *Ps.* ciii. 17) And what is its unfathomable Depth, as it hath brought him, who thought it no Robbery to be equal with God, to the lowest State of Humiliation and Sufferings in the Form of a Servant, and to the ignominious Death of the Cross; (*Phil.* ii. 6—8) and as it has stoop'd and condescended to you in your low Estate, to raise you out of the deepest Abyss of Sin and Misery; (*Ps.* xl. 2, and *Zech.* ix. 11) and to deliver you from the Wrath to come: (1 *Thess.* i. 10.) And what is its superlative Height, as he is still mindful of you in his exalted State at the Father's Right Hand, where he is placed in mediatorial Honours higher than the Heavens, and ever lives to make Intercession for you; (*Heb.* vii. 25, 26) and as he has advanced you to all the inconceivable Dignities and Privileges, that belong to the Adoption of Sons, and will in due Time raise you up to the heavenly Mansions of unspeakable and endless Glory. (*John* xiv. 2, 3.)

19 *And to know the Love of Christ, which passeth Knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the Fulness of God.*

19. And my Heart's Desire for you is, that ye may be enabled, yet more and more, to have just Apprehensions and enlarged Views by Faith, together with an experimental Feeling of the Virtue, Power and Sweetness of the transcendent, free and sovereign Love of Christ, and of God through him, in its most excellent Manifestations, Fruits and Effects, which in itself, and in its wonderful Operations, Provisions and Designs, infinitely surpasses all the Comprehension or adequate Ideas of Men and Angels, (*ver.* 8 and 10.) in every one of the aforesaid boundless Dimensions: And all this I beg of God for you, to the end that, (ἵνα) upon the Whole, ye may be, still more and more, Partakers of a divine Nature, (2 *Pet.* i. 4.) and may be enriched, as much as possible, with all that Fulness of Light and

and Grace, Holiness, Joy and Peace in this present Life, which God has design'd and prepared in his eternal Counsels of Wisdom and Love, and in the Merit of his Son, and has promised in his Covenant, and communicates to his chief Favourites, at their best Seasons, while they are here; and that ye may, at length, arrive at the most perfect Vision and Enjoyment of him, and spotless Conformity to him, in his immediate Presence, where *is Fulness of Joy, and at whose Right Hand there are Pleasures for evermore.* (Ps. xvi. 11, and see the Note on *Col.* ii. 9.)

20 *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the Power that worketh in us.*

20. Now therefore, to shut up this comprehensive Prayer, on your Behalf, with a Doxology, that may raise our Hope, unworthy as we are in ourselves of its full Accomplishment, Unto the great and blessed God, the only Object of our Faith and Expectation, Worship and Obedience,* to whom I have presented my humble Supplications in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the only Mediator, (*ver.* 14) for the highest and most extensive Blessings, that can be wish'd, or that we can be capable of enjoying: To him who is Almighty, with whom nothing is too hard to do, but who is infinitely able to answer this and every other, even the most enlarged Prayer of Faith, and to fulfil our utmost Desires, according to the Propensions and Designs of his boundless Love; yea, who is easily able to do superabundantly more, than we have already ask'd, or can possibly petition for, or conceive of, and *that* in a Way of divine Operation, which we have already had abundant Experience of, and which is correspondent to the exceeding Greatness of his Power to us-ward who believe. (*Chap.* i. 19, 20.)

21 *Unto him* be *Glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all Ages, World without end. Amen.*

21. To this all-sufficient, gracious, Covenant-God be ascribed all possible Honour, in a Way of Faith and Love, Adoration, Worship and Obedience, Thanksgiving, Blessing and Praise, on account of his infinite Perfections, and of his Counsels and Works of Creation, Providence and Grace, in the Universal Church, both visible and invisible, in Heaven and Earth, and in every particular Church, and by all the Members of each of them, which are included in the Catholic Church; May this solemn Tribute be presented to him by them, in the most spiritual and acceptable Manner, through Jesus Christ, as the only Mediator, in and by whom all our Prayers and Praises are to be offer'd, that they may be accepted on his Account: (*John* xiv. 13, 14. and 15, 16. *Col.* iii. 17. *Heb.* xiii. 15. and 1 *Pet.* ii. 5.) And may this be done through all the Periods of Time, and all Generations in

* This noble Doxology is admirably adapted to encourage and strengthen our Faith, that it might not stagger at the great Things, which the Apostle had been praying for, as though they were too much for God to give, or for his People to expect from him, whose Thoughts and Ways are as much above ours, as the Heavens are above the Earth, and whose Love exceeds all the Dimensions, whereby we use to measure Things.

this World, and to the endless Ages of Eternity in that which is to come! Thus it shall be, and thus I, and all that love him in Sincerity and Truth, heartily wish and pray it may be, in Token of which let them all join with me in saying, *Amen.*

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a blessed Dispensation is that of the Gospel! The Wisdom of God in the Mystery of Salvation, and the Riches of his Grace, even to us *Gentile*-Sinners, according to his eternal Purpose in Christ Jesus, are now display'd, to Men and Angels, with much greater Evidence and Extent by the Holy Spirit, in the Writings of inspired Men, than ever were experienced or made known to former Ages. How equal now are Believers of all Nations in spiritual Privileges and Blessings! They are Fellow-Heirs and of the same Body, and Partakers of the great Promise of the Spirit, through Jesus Christ, by means of the Gospel; and they have holy Boldness and Freedom of Access to a Throne of Grace, with humble Hope and Confidence of Acceptance by Faith in him. How gloriously does Grace reign throughout the Gospel! It is the Gospel of the Grace of God; Grace has provided and given it, and sends and qualifies Ministers to preach it with Success; its whole Scheme is a Doctrine of free Grace, and all its important Blessings are convey'd merely by Grace. And O how unsearchable are the Riches of Christ that it reveals and brings to us! With what deep Self-abasement, and affecting Admiration of divine Favour, should Ministers reflect upon the Honour of being called and qualified to preach them! And who can express the Happiness of those that are enriched with them! They have the sweetest Supports under all present Tribulations; and when they are enabled with Faith and Patience to bear them, especially those that are, even to Imprisonment, for the sake of Christ, this will prove to be an honourable Testimony to the Truth and Power of the Gospel, and will turn to their own best Account, and be their Glory; and all this they may comfortably hope for, since nothing is too great or good for Faith to ask, or for God to give, on Christ's Account. What more comprehensive Prayer can be offer'd, than *that God would grant us, according to the Riches of his Glory, to be strengthen'd with Might by his Spirit in the inner Man; that Christ may dwell in our Hearts by Faith; that we being rooted and grounded in Love, may be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the Breadth and Length and Depth and Height, and to know the Love of Christ which passeth Knowledge; and that we may be filled with all the Fulness of God?* Whose Thoughts can fully stretch to all this? *But God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the Power that works in us.* In what a humble and adoring Manner, as with bended Knees, and yet with what Encouragement and Hope, should we address him, as the Almighty God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole Family in Heaven and Earth is named! And with what high Ascriptions of Glory should he be worshipped, through Jesus Christ, by the Church in all Generations upon Earth, and by Saints and Angels to all Eternity in Heaven! *Amen*, so let it be, and so it shall be.

CHAP. IV.

The Apostle proceeds from the doctrinal *to the* practical *Part of this Epistle, which he introduces with a general Exhortation to the whole Church to walk worthy of their Christian-calling,* 1. *And then, to recommend and exemplify it, he excites them by several weighty Arguments to mutual Forbearance and Union,* 2—6. *To a due Use of all their spiritual Gifts and Graces for Edification,* 7—16. *To Purity and Holiness in Heart and Life,* 17—24.

And

And to take heed of several Sins that were practised among the Heathens, but were inconsistent with their Christian-Profession, 25—32.

TEXT.

1 I *Therefore, the Prisoner of th Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith ye are called.*

2 *With all Lowliness and Meekness, with Long-suffering, forbearing one another in Love.*

3 *Endeavouring to keep the Unity of the*

PARAPHRASE.

1. SINCE such great and glorious Privileges and Blessings, as have been hitherto discoursed of, are freely bestowed upon all, and every one of you that are true Believers in Christ, whether ye be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, (*Chap.* iii. 6.) I therefore who am a Prisoner in Bonds, not for any Fault of mine, but by the wise and holy Disposal of the Lord Jesus, and for his Sake, because I faithfully preach his Gospel in all its Extent to *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, (Chap. iii. 1.) and for his Honour and Glory, that I might bear a noble Testimony by not only preaching, but also suffering for him; Even I, who am not ashamed of my Chain, earnestly entreat you in his Name, and by these Bonds, to live and act with Constancy and Perseverance to the End, at such an honourable Rate as becomes the Gospel, (See the Note on *Luke* xxi. 36.) and is every Way agreeable and ornamental to the high and holy Calling of God in Christ Jesus, wherewith ye are called externally by the Word, and internally by the efficacious Operation of his Spirit, *to Glory and Virtue, and to the obtaining of the Glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*, (2 Pet. i. 3. and 2 Thes. ii. 14.)

2. As ever ye would bring Credit to the Gospel, and act suitable to its spiritual Privileges and Obligations, See to it, that the Whole of your Behaviour be with all Humbleness of Mind, esteeming others better than yourselves, (*Phil.* ii. 3.) and abasing your Souls before God, under a Sense of what ye were by Nature, and of your utter Unworthiness of the high Favours, that he hath bestowed upon you; and with all Courteousness, Candor, Calmness and Sweetness of Temper and Deportment towards one another: Let this Humility and Meekness prevail unto all Restraints of angry Passions on Account of Affronts and Injuries, tho' often repeated, that ye may bear them without retaliating or revenging them; And as to the Weaknesses and Indiscretions, Frowardness and peevish Tempers of any of your Brethren, of whom better Things might be expected, Overlook them, or sustain them with a calm and composed Spirit, that rather pities and excuses, than is offended with, and would distress your Fellow-christians: And let all this be done from a Principle of Love to Christ, and to them for his Sake; only let it not be in such a Way, as shall countenance, or indulge them in any Thing that is sinful, which would be, in Effect, to hate, rather than to love them, (*Lev.* xix. 17.)

3. In this Manner carefully study, and lay out yourselves, with the utmost Speed and Diligence, and by all proper Means,

Spirit in the Bond of Peace.

to maintain and preserve that spiritual Union and Harmony of Souls, which is the Fruit of the Spirit, and consists in that mutual Peace, which, upon the Principles before-mentioned, is the best and strongest Bond of your religious Society, and of your holy Fellowship together in a Church-state.

4 There is *one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one Hope of your Calling;*

4. This amiable Union ought, by all Means, to be cultivated among you, considering the joint Interest and Concernment, that ye have in such excellent Things, as direct and oblige you to be united in Heart and Affection; as, to mention a few remarkable Particulars, The Catholic Church is but one mystical Body, of which Christ is the Head, and ye are all alike Members; and therefore ye should have the same Fellow-feeling, Concern and Care one for another: (1 *Cor.* xii. 25, 26, 27.) And one and the same divine and holy Spirit, of which ye are Partakers, animates, guides and dwells in the whole mystical Body, and in every Member of it, in whom he also has wrought the same Spirit and Temper after his own Likeness, who is the Spirit of Love and Peace; and therefore ye ought to act with united Hearts according to his Dictates, under his Influence, and in Resemblance of him: But to have Hearts disaffected one to another is like having two, or more Souls, and *that* of contrary Dispositions and Qualities, in one Body: Ye are likewise called, by Grace, to God's Kingdom and Glory, (1 *Thes.* ii. 12.) as the *one summary Object* of your Hope; and in your effectual Calling, ye are Partakers of *one and the same Grace* of Hope, which terminates on Christ, as its only Foundation; and therefore ye should live in Harmony and Peace, as Heirs together of the Grace of Life, and Expectants of one and the same blessed Inheritance of the Saints in Light.

5 *One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism,*

5. There is *one* Lord and Saviour of all true Believers, even Jesus Christ, who is the only Mediator, Head and King of the Church; and therefore ye ought to unite, as with one Heart and Soul, in your Dependence upon him, in your Allegiance, Love and Obedience to him, and in your sincere Affection to all his Subjects, according to the Laws of his Kingdom: There is also *one* and the same *Rule* and *Doctrine* of Faith, and *one Object* of it, and *one Sort* of like precious Faith, which is common to the whole Church of Christ, and these are to be entertained and improved by the *same Actings* of Faith in every Member of it; and therefore this Faith should work by Love to him, its glorious Object, and to one another for his Sake: And the Baptism of all, that belong to the Church of Christ, is but *one* in its Nature, Tendency and Design, whether ye consider it as the *internal* Baptism of the Holy Ghost, by which they are renewed and sanctified; or as the *external* Ordinance of Baptism with Water, which is to be *but once* administred, and by which that spiritual Benefit is sig-

signified; and they, in Token of it, are visibly and solemnly devoted to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and are enrolled in the Christian church, and brought under the strongest Bonds to be intirely and unreservedly the Lord's, in whose *one* Name, in Opposition to all other Gods, they are baptised; (See the Note and Paraphrase on *Mat.* xxviii. 19.) and therefore ye should behave with the utmost Unanimity in acting up to Character, and answering your Obligations, according to your holy Principles and Profession.

6 One God and Father of all, who is *above all, and through all, and in you all.*

6. To conclude these engaging *Unities*, The Covenant-God and Father of all sincere Believers, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, is but *one*; (Rom. iii. 29, 30.) and they all stand in the nearest Relation to him, as his People and his Children *, who is infinitely above them all in his own Nature and Perfections, and in his Dominion over them; yea, is exalted above all Blessing and Praise; and whose special Influence diffuses through all and every Part of the mystical Body of Christ, to preserve, govern and supply them: and who, by his Spirit and Grace, dwells in all of you that believe, as in his Temple, and works in every one of you *that, which is well-pleasing in his Sight through Jesus Christ*; (Heb. xiii. 21.) and therefore ye ought to be of one Heart and Soul in your Acknowledgements, Love and Reverence of him, and in your Obedience and Subjection to him, as your own God and Father; and should love as Brethren, and as Children, that have one and the same God for your heavenly Father.

7 But unto every one of us is given Grace according to the

7 But tho' we are all Members of one Catholic Church, and there are so many important Things, in which we are agreed, and therefore ought heartily to unite in the Bonds

* Tho' *God* may be stiled *the Father of all Things universally, who is above, through, and in them all*, as he created and upholds them, and has supreme Dominion over them, and as in him we live, and move, and have our Being; yet *the Father of all*, &c. in this Place evidently means something more peculiar and distinguishing, with special Relation to all *his People*, and to his gracious and effectual Operation in them: For this best suits the Design of the Apostle's Argument, and is most agreeable to all the other Instances of Union before recited, which undoubtedly have a particular and restrained Reference to *the Church*; and the *all* here intended admits of a very easy Construction, as answering to the *one Body*, ver. 4, and to *you all* in the Close of this Verse. But when the Father of all true Believers is said to be *one God*, this no more excludes the Son and Spirit from being God, together with the Father, than Christ's being called *one Lord*, and the Holy Ghost *one Spirit*, ver. 4, 5, excludes the Father from being *Lord* and *Spirit* together with them: And what is here said of *God the Father* as *over* or *above all* (επι παντων) is said of *Christ* as *over all* (επι παντων) *God blessed for ever*; (Rom. ix. 5) and as the Father is *through* and *in all* Believers, and all Things that refer to them; so 'tis said of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all Things are *by him* or *through him* (δι ου τα παντα) 1 *Cor.* viii. 6, and that he *fills all in all*, Ephes. i. 23; and Believers are the *Temples of the Holy Ghost, in whom the Spirit of God dwells*, 1 Cor. iii. 16. Therefore *one God and Father of all* may be consider'd either as a *personal* Character, and so the Meaning is, that there is but one God the Father, in Distinction from God the Son and Spirit; or as an *essential* Character, and so there is but one true God, inclusive of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, to whom we are devoted in our Baptism, *ver.* 5, in Opposition to all false Gods, and with just the same Propriety it may be said there is *one God the Son*, and one *God the Spirit*, to distinguish them *personally* from the Father, and *essentially* from all false Gods.

Measure of the Gift of Christ.

of Love and Peace; yet there are other Things, in which, as Members of the same Body, there is a beautiful Difference between us, with respect to spiritual Offices and Endowments, which all proceed from one and the same Author, and are fully consistent with the most excellent and desirable Union, and subservient to the same common End. And that none may be discontented on the one Hand, or proud on the other, and none may envy or despise another, Let it be considered that all the Variety of Graces, and spiritual Gifts and Attainments, which in one Degree or other we are severally favoured with, are given to us, not according to our Deserts, but by an Act of mere Grace in such Measures and Proportions, as Christ sees fittest and best to bestow them upon us, not only for the Benefit of our own Souls, but likewise for the Edification of one another, (1 *Cor.* xii. 7.)

8 *Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led Captivity captive, and gave Gifts unto Men.*

8. This appears from a remarkable Scripture-prophecy of Christ, where God speaking by *David*, in Allusion to the Triumphs of Conquerors, says, with Reference to the Messiah, (*Psal.* lxviii. 18.) when, after Victory obtained over all his Enemies, he ascended in Grandeur and Triumph up to Glory, thousands of Angels attending him, as his pompous Train, he led Sin, Satan, the World and Death, as his Spoils of War, and Captives in Chains, even those very Enemies, that had taken Multitudes captive, and enslaved them †; and as great Generals and Princes use to scatter Largesses or Donatives among the People with a liberal Hand, in Days of publick Entry with the Spoils of War into their capital Cities; so our Lord Jesus Christ, having *spoiled Principalities and Powers*, (Col. ii. 15.) distributed the most excellent Gifts and Graces of his Spirit, with the richest Profusion ‖, among Men of all Nations upon Earth, as free and glorious Ascension-Gifts to them, for whom he, as Mediator and Head of the Church, received them of his Father, as the Reward of his Sufferings and Death, that

† The learned Mr. *Peirce* in an Appendix to this Verse, *pag.* 74, conjectures, that Christ's leading *Captivity captive* is to be understood of *good Angels*; and yet he allows that, if we were to be intirely guided by the Etymology, the Word there used would relate to Persons taken in War; and the Instances he alledges from the *New Testament* for a different Sense, either allude to *War*, or a violent *Capture*; or when any were brought into Captivity with the Consent of the Captive, it is sometimes taken in a bad, as well as at others in a good Sense; so that his Notion rests on a very uncertain Foundation; and I don't easily apprehend, how the holy Angels can be called *a Captivity*, which our Lord led captive. (See also the Note *Col.* ii. 15.)

‖ The *Gifts* here intended most directly refer to those extraordinary ones, that were bestowed upon the Church in its Officers, but may likewise be extended to *all the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit*, that private Members, as well as Church-Officers, whether ordinary or extraordinary, are favoured with: For the Allusion is to Conquerors throwing their Largesses among *the common People*; and the Gifts here meant were received by Christ, as Man and Mediator, in order to his giving them to *the Rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them*, as 'tis expressed, *Ps.* lxviii. 18, to which this Passage refers. Accordingly *he ascended that he might fill all Things*, ver. 10; and the *Edification of the Body of Christ*, that many might be framed into it, and all its Members might derive Virtue from him, as their Head, seem to be included in these Gifts, as the Apostle afterwards explains himself, *ver.* 12—16.

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he might give them, even to the moft unworthy and rebellious Sinners, inclufive of the *Gentiles*, that a reconciled God might place his Tabernacle, and take up his gracious Abode among them.

9 (Now that he afcended, what is it but that he alfo defcended firft into the lower Parts of the Earth?

9. Now when 'tis faid that he afcended up on high in fuch a victorious and triumphant Manner, as was fit for none but a God to be honoured with, and as none could have been capable of, but he who was *declared to be the Son of God with Power by his Refurrection from the Dead*, (Rom. i. 4.) What does this intimate to us, but that, as his mediatorial Triumph was founded on his Obedience unto Death; fo antecedent, and in Order to his glorious Exaltation, he defcended from Heaven to Earth in the Affumption of the human Nature into perfonal Union with himfelf, and was conceived in the Womb of the Virgin *Mary*, (Luke i. 30, 31. §) and, being brought forth, lived in a State of Humiliation and Sufferings in this lower World, for the Satisfaction of divine Juftice, till at length he was crucified and buried in the Grave?

10 He that defcended, is the fame alfo that afcended up far above all Heavens, that he might fill all Things)

10. That Jefus, who in this Manner humbled himfelf to fuch an amazing Degree, (fee *Phil.* ii. 8) is the very fame divine Perfon, that alfo (after he had conquered all his fpiritual Enemies) afcended up to the Throne of God his Father, to fit down on the Right-hand of the Majefty on high in the third Heaven, far above the Region of the Air, and all vifible Heavens; and he afcended for this important End and Purpofe, that in Virtue of the Merit of his Death, and of the Victory and Triumph of his Refurrection and Afcenfion, he might fill the whole Church, and all its Officers and Members, and might fill up all its Ordinances and Adminiftrations with the Gifts and Graces of his Spirit, by pouring them out abundantly from on high; and fo might perfect all Things that relate to the further Execution of his Offices, and to the Salvation of the Church; and might fulfil all Types and Prophecies concerning himfelf, that are not yet accomplifhed.

11 And he gave fome, Apoftles: And fome, Prophets: And fome, Evangelifts: And fome, Paftors and Teachers.

11. And in purfuit of this great and gracious Defign, he among other of his liberal and free Donations, and in fubfervience to all the reft, furnifhed the Church, Firft, with *extraordinary* Officers, that were only temporary, as needful in its infant-State and firft Plantation of the Gofpel: Of this Sort he appointed and ordained fome *Apoftles*, that were to

§ *The lower Parts of the Earth* is a Phrafe ufed in the Old Teftament for the *Womb*, Pf. cxxxix. 15. and for the *Grave*, Pf. lxiii. 9; and Chrift's being *buried* is called his being *in the Heart of the Earth*, Mat. xii. 40: But as his *afcending* contains every thing that relates to his *Glorification*; fo his *defcending* may be confider'd as including, not only his *Incarnation* and *Burial*, but the *whole State of his Humiliation* upon Earth: And as his *defcending* is inferr'd from his *afcending*, this goes upon a Suppofition of his being God, who was originally from above, as he faid of himfelf, *John* iii. 13; otherwife there is no Confequence from his *afcending* to his *defcending*, fince all the Saints will afcend to Heaven, tho' none of them firft defcended from thence. Vid. *Zanch.* in Loc.

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be his chief Miniſters and ſpecial Witneſſes, as having ſeen him after his Reſurrection, and received their Commiſſion immediately from himſelf, and been endow'd with Privileges peculiar to themſelves; ſuch as an Ability of fully communicating the whole Scheme of the Goſpel under divine Inſpiration, and a Furniture of Powers, not only of working all Sorts of Miracles, but alſo of conveying the Holy Ghoſt to Believers by the laying on of their Hands. Theſe our bleſſed Saviour moſt ſolemnly confirmed in their Office, and eminently qualified for it, by a plentiful Effuſion of his Spirit after his Reſurrection and Aſcenſion, tho' he had choſen and ſent forth many of them to it before his Death. He alſo gave ſome *Prophets*, that were enabled to explain the Old Teſtament-Prophecies, and foretel Things to come, by an immediate Inſpiration; and ſome *Evangeliſts*, whoſe Office it was to attend, and aſſiſt the Apoſtles in their Travels, and in their Work, and to go on their Meſſages, and ſettle Churches in various diſtant Places, where the Apoſtles had preached the Goſpel, but could not ſtay any Length of Time to carry on and finiſh the begun Work: And beſides theſe, he in the Riches of his Love and Care appointed *ordinary* Officers, to be of perpetual ſtanding Uſe, as what will be needful to the Church through all Generations to the End of the World: Of theſe he inſtituted, and endow'd with ſpiritual Gifts and Graces, ſome *Paſtors*, who are alſo ſtiled *Biſhops* and *Elders*, that ſhould be ſettled in particular Churches to take a peculiar Care of them, to preſide, watch and rule over them in the Lord, and to adminiſter all the Ordinances of Worſhip and Diſcipline, as well as to preach the Word to them: And for Aſſiſtants to theſe, in like Manner as the Evangeliſts were to the Apoſtles, he graciouſly appointed other *Miniſters of the Goſpel at large*, to be employ'd in various Churches and Congregations, as Occaſions might require, tho' not with full Power to perform all the Parts of the Paſtoral Office *.

12 *For the Perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Miniſtry, for the edifying of the Body of Chriſt;*

12. This wiſe, holy and gracious Appointment of theſe various Officers is ſuited and deſign'd, and, by the Bleſſing of the Lord upon them, is ſucceſsful (πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν) for jointing in and compleating the Number of the Saints, and their various Gifts and Graces, that they may adhere to Chriſt by Faith, and to one another by Love, and for uniting and compacting thoſe that are renewed and ſanctified, by Means of their Miniſtrations, into a regular and orderly Society, and ſetting thoſe Members to rights, and reducing

* Some think that *Paſtors* and *Teachers* mean the ſame Office; and its not being ſaid *ſome Paſtors*, and *ſome Teachers*, juſt in the ſame *diſtinctive* Way, as is uſed with reſpect to *extraordinary* Officers, may ſeem to countenance that Thought. But as all Teachers are not *Paſtors*, though all Paſtors are *Teachers*, and as all the forementioned Officers are diſtinguiſhed from each other, I rather chooſe to underſtand Paſtors, and Teachers, with the Difference made between them in the Paraphraſe.

them

them to their proper Place, that are, at any Time, dislocated by their Falls *. He also ordained them to their respective Offices, for their faithfully dispensing the Word and Ordinances with Labour and Diligence, and for his rendering the Work of the Gospel-ministry, authentic, and effectual to all spiritual and saving Purposes: And he gave them for the building up of the mystical Body of Christ, the Church, in Light, Faith, Love and Joy, and in all holy Obedience; as also for making continual Additions to them of such as shall be saved. One or other of these Officers, as particularly *Pastors* and *Teachers*, are to be continued in the Church, by the Institution of Christ, for serving these blessed Purposes;

13 *Till we all come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ:*

13 Till all of us, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, weak or strong Believers, that are Members of this mystical Body of Christ, (including those that now do, and hereafter shall believe in successive Generations to the End of the World) shall meet, and be cemented together in an intire Agreement about the Doctrines of Faith, and in the sweetest Harmony, Union and Oneness, by Means of the same Kind of special Faith in Christ; and of a clear, affectionate and fiducial Knowledge, and (επιγνωσεως) approving Acknowledgment of the eternal Son of God, as a divine Person, and the only Lord and Saviour; and so, by gradually improving in Gifts and Graces, shall, at length, arrive at a State of complete Manhood in spiritual Understanding, Vigour, Strength and Attainments of every valuable Kind, even unto the full Proportion of that mature Age and spiritual Stature in Christ, which he designs us for, and which is acquired by Derivation from his mediatorial Fulness, and makes up the utmost Fulness of his mystical Body, that it is capable of under him, as its Head, with Regard to the Perfection of its Graces, Comfort and Holiness in Heaven, as well as to the compleating of the whole Number of the Elect:

14 *That we henceforth be no more Children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every Wind of Doctrine, by the Sleight of Men, and cunning Craftiness,*

14. That, in this Way, we may not continue to be, as some of us too much are, like Children in Knowledge and Understanding, weak in Faith, wavering in Judgment, taken with every new Thing, and easily misled; nor, like a Ship without Ballast in a tempestuous Sea, tossed and tumbled hither and thither, (κλυδωνιζομενοι και περιφερομενοι) or driven about, like flying Clouds, by every erroneous Doctrine, which may be compared to the Wind for Instability and

* The learned *Grotius* would have a *Transposition* of these Clauses, so as to place *the Work of the Ministry* before the *Perfecting of the Saints*. But, as far as I see, they may stand with Propriety enough in the Order, in which we find them according to the Sense given in the Paraphrase; and this Order is extremely beautiful, if we receive Dr. *Marshal*'s rendring of the Original, which stands thus, *to the fitting out holy Persons to the Work of the Ministry, to the edifying the Body of Christ*; in *Blackwell*'s Sacred Classicks, Vol. II. Pag. 174.

Force,

whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

Force, through the Fallacies, Sophisms and crafty Doublings of artful and designing Men, who act like Jugglers in casting a Die, (ἐν τῇ κυβείᾳ) by plausible Pretences, and subtle Methods of cheating and imposing upon us;

15 But speaking the Truth in Love, may grow up into him in all Things, which is the Head, even *Christ:*

15. But that, on the contrary, we may sincerely speak of, and plead for the Truth of the Gospel, with a Spirit of Love to Christ, to the Truth itself, and to the Souls of others; and may, like living Members of a living Head, increase in all Light, Grace and Holiness, and in every Part of the new Creature, by Virtue of our Union with him, in Conformity to him, and for his Honour and Glory, who is our only vital Head, even Christ himself.

16 From whom the whole Body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the Measure of every part, maketh Increase of the Body unto the edifying of itself in Love.

16. From whom, as from the Head and Fountain, the whole mystical Body,† that is composed of many Members, which are duly and orderly adapted one to another, and cemented together, like Joint to Joint, and all of which are united to Christ, the Head, by that Energy, which is communicated from him through every Ordinance and Officer of the Church, and through every private Member in its Place and Sphere of Action, according to the efficacious Operation of his Spirit; which being exerted in the Proportion that is suited to the State, Condition and Exigence of every Part, produces an Improvement of the whole Body of Christ, unto the building of it up in all the Love, which every Member ought to have, and by which it affectionately acts towards him and one another, and toward the whole Church, till it be perfected in the heavenly World.

17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the Vanity of their Mind.

17. Since therefore ye, as Members of Christ, are Partakers of such Privileges and Advantages, as have been but now recited, (*ver.* 11—16) I must again, as, in Effect, I did before, (*ver.* 1) earnestly intreat you, and solemnly injoin it upon you, in the Name, and by the Authority of the Lord Jesus, who is Witness of what I say, that from this Time forward ye no more live and act like other *Gentiles*, who still remain in an unconverted State; but that ye utterly abandon their sinful, sensual, worldly and idolatrous Courses, which are all empty, unprofitable and deceitful, and which they go into through the vain and foolish Conceit, Turn and Temper of their own depraved Minds.

18 Having the Understanding darkened, being alienated from the Life of God, thro' the Ignorance that is in them, because of the

18. For the noblest Faculty and Power of their Souls, even their Understanding, in all its Thoughts and Reasonings about spiritual Things, is overspread with a thick Mist of Ignorance and Error; and their Wills and Affections, as well as their Minds, are quite Strangers and averse to the Way of Life, Holiness and Happiness, which God has ap-

† Here is a manifest Allusion to the *human Body*, which is composed of different Joints and Members, knit together by various Ligaments, and furnished with Nerves, Tendons and other Vessels of Communication from the Head to every Part of the Body, which by these Means is nourished, actuated and invigorated, and arrives to its full Strength and Stature.

Blindness of their Heart:

pointed, and to that Sort of Life itself, which he requires, and approves, and is the Author of; by which he lives in the Soul, and it lives to him; and which consists in a holy Communion with him, and Conformity to him. Their Understanding is darkned through the innate and wilful Ignorance, that is indulged, increased and confirmed in them, relating to what they might, and ought to have known of God, even by the Light of Nature ‖: (*Rom.* i. 19, 20, 21.) And they are alienated from the Life of God, not merely for Want of proper Inducements to seek after it; but through a chosen and customary, as well as natural Stupidity, Perverseness and Hardness of their own carnal Hearts; whereby they resist and stifle the best Sentiments of their own Minds and Consciences, as *not liking to retain God in their Knowledge*; (Rom. i. 28.)

19 *Who being past feeling, have given themselves over unto Lasciviousness, to work all Uncleanness with Greediness.*

19. Who through their contracted Habit of Ignorance, Error and Hardness of Heart, and through the righteous Judgment of God in giving them up to their own Sin and Choice, (*Rom.* i. 28.) have no uneasy painful Reflections upon their multiplied and gross Iniquities; but are become quite insensible of, and unaffected with, what they know concerning the *Judgment of God, that they which commit such Things are worthy of Death*, (Rom. i. 32.) their Consciences being *seared* as *with a hot Iron*; (1 Tim. iv 2.) And so they have voluntarily, and with full Consent, delivered themselves up to all Manner of abominable Filthiness in their Affections and Conversation, unto the practising of the most shameful Impurities, and *that* with the greatest Thirst and Eagerness in their Thoughts about them, and in their Desires and Pursuits after them, as if their highest Happiness, Gain and Enjoyment lay in them. (See *Rom.* i. 24—32.) This is the hateful and deplorable Case of the unconverted *Gentiles*; and gives the true Picture, and an affecting View of what ye yourselves once were, and of what all Mankind by Nature are, or would be, as left to the Power of their own corrupt Hearts, (*Chap.* ii. 3.)

20 *But ye have not so learned Christ;*

20 But, as for you, my Brethren, who are brought out of Darkness into marvellous Light, Ye have not thus learned the Doctrines of Christ, relating to his Person, Offices and Design, nor the Obligations ye are under to him, and the Privileges ye have received from him, which are all pure and holy; Ye have not learned any Thing from Christ, that could induce you, or so much as give you Leave to allow yourselves in, or venture upon such licen-

‖ *Through the Ignorance that is in them* (δια την αγνοιαν) seems most directly to answer to their having the *Understanding darkned*: And *because of the Blindness*, or rather *through the Hardness* of their Heart (δια την πωρωσιν) answers to their being *alienated from the Life of God*; and so the latter Part of the Verse distinctly assigns the immediate Causes of the two Evils respectively, that are mention'd in the former Part of it.

 tious

tious Practices as these *; No, your very Souls must needs have the utmost Abhorrence of them, and your Lives be prevailingly free from them;

21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the Truth is Jesus:

21. If (as ye profess, and as I am persuaded of you †) ye have indeed understood, hearken'd to, believed and *obeyed from the Heart, that Form of Doctrine,* (Rom. vi. 17.) which ye have heard from Christ, and concerning him by his Servants; and if ye have not only heard by the Hearing of the Ear, but have also been internally and savingly enlighten'd, and taught by his Spirit heartily to receive the Truth of the Gospel in its Simplicity and Purity, according to its genuine Tendency and Design, as it was delivered by the Lord Jesus himself, and afterwards by his inspired Apostles, and was exemplified in his Temper and Conduct, and is practised by all those, who, as living Members of his mystical Body, are united to him. What ye have hereby been taught, and influenced, as well as obliged to is;

22 That ye put off concerning the former Conversation, the old Man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Lusts;

22. That ye labour by his Grace, and in the Use of all proper and appointed Means, yet more and more, and even intirely, to discard and abandon the old Man, the Body of Sin, (*Rom.* vi. 6. See the Paraphrase there.) which discovered itself in your former wicked Practices through all the Days of your Unregeneracy; and to throw it aside with Abhorrence, as ye would an old filthy Garment, that is no longer fit to be worn, it being in itself the most debasing Evil, that corrupts all the Faculties of the Soul, and all the Members of the Body, and tends unto, and, unless cured by renewing Grace, would certainly issue in eternal Destruction, according to the Workings of its impetuous and unlawful Appetites and Inclinations, which deceive carnal Hearts with false Appearances of Profit, Honour, or Pleasure; and by specious Allurements betray them into unexpected Shame and Misery.

23 And be renewed in the Spirit of your Mind.

23. And this saving Knowledge of Christ excites and binds you, not only to mortify your Corruptions, but also to abound in all Grace and Holiness, that ye may press after a still further Renovation §, through the sanctifying In-

* These Words, *ye have not so learned Christ,* admit of two Ways of rendering them, which amount, in Effect, to the same Sense. One is as we have it in our Translation; and the other is, *but not so ye; ye have learned Christ,* intimating that their Knowledge of him would not suffer them to go into the foremention'd immoral Courses.

† The Apostle explains what Sort of *learning Christ* he meant, *viz.* not merely that which is *external* by the Word, but likewise that which is *internal* and effectual by his Spirit; accordingly the Particle *if so be* (εἴγε) may be consider'd as putting the Supposition for Argument's Sake; or else, as what he took for granted was really the Case of these *Ephesians*: And tho' this Form of Expression might be design'd to awaken a serious Inquiry in their Minds, whether they were in Truth what they professed to be; yet it seems to be used here as a Particle of *affirming*, rather than of *doubting*, and so signifies *in as much as*, or *seeing that* ye have heard, &c. (See the Note on *Chap.* iii. 2.)

§ As the Apostle supposed that these *Ephesians* had *learned Christ*, and *been taught by him as the Truth is in Jesus*, ver. 20, 21, he could not but look upon them, in the Judgment of Charity, as already regenerated, or born again; and therefore *renewing in the Spirit of their Mind*, must relate, not to

Influences of the holy Spirit, in the inmost Powers of the Soul, which is of a spiritual Nature, but is all over depraved by the Fall; and particularly after a growing Renovation in your Understanding, that superior and leading Faculty, as well as in your Will and Affections, which are, or ought to be under its Conduct.

24 And that ye put on the new Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness.

24. And a further End of your learning Christ is, that instead of wearing the Deformity of the old Man any longer, by giving Way to Sin, ye may, by daily and increasing Exercises of Grace, dress and adorn yourselves (1 *Pet.* iii. 3, 4.) with all the Beauties of the new Creature, which is formed in the whole Man, when *old Things are past away, and all Things become new*; (2 Cor. v. 17.) and which may be called *the new Man*, because of its excellent Qualities, and its being lately begotten in the Soul, after Sin had continued in long Possession there; and because it *is not corruptible*, as the old Man is; (1 *Pet.* iii. 4.) And this new Man is God's own *Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good Works*, (Ephes. ii. x.) and is produced by his infinite Wisdom, Power and Grace, according to his holy Will, and after his own Image, in which he at first created Man; (*Gen.* i. 27.) and which consists in divine Principles and Dispositions, Habits and Acts of Justice and Honesty towards our Fellow-creatures, and of Purity and Piety toward God: And all this Holiness is real, internal and effectual, in Opposition to Hypocrisy, and to the external and ceremonial Purifications of the *Mosaic* Law; and is attended with the Knowledge of the Truth, which is another Part of the Image of God, (*Col.* iii. 10.)

25 Wherefore putting away Lying, speak every Man Truth with his Neighbour; for we are Members one of another.

25. Therefore, according to these Advantages and Obligations, Take heed of all those Sins, which ye formerly have been addicted to, but which are directly contrary to your Christian-character; as for Instance, See to it, that ye banish Falshood and Lies, Deceit and Frauds of every Kind, to the remotest Distance from your Designs and Conversation, as the most detestable Sins, that sap the Foundation of all good Morality itself, and are utterly unworthy of the Man, and much more of the Christian: And, as God commanded *Israel*, (*Zech.* viii. 16.) Let every one of you sincerely make Conscience of, and pay a strict Regard to Truth, at all Times, in every Circumstance, and in every Thing that he says and does to others, whatever Temptations he may have, and whatever any of the Heathens may teach or practise, to the contrary *. For we,

to the first Work of the Spirit in their Conversion, but to a Progressiveness in those holy Principles and Dispositions, that were wrought in them by heart-changing Grace.

* It appears from several *Heathen*-Writers, that they thought it lawful to tell a Lie, when it might be profitable for them; and that, in such Cases, it was better than a hurtful Truth. (See various Testimonies to this Purpose in Dr. *Whitby*'s Note on this Verse.)

who

who believe in Christ, are as much Members of *civil* Society as ever; and therefore ought to be true and faithful to all Mankind, as having a joint Interest and Concernment in the Welfare of the Whole: And we are Members of the same *spiritual* Body, of which Christ is the Head; and therefore ought, in a special Manner, to avoid Deceit, and speak the Truth to our Fellow-christians, that we may not injure, but be helpful to one another, as Members of the natural Body use to be.

26 Be ye angry, and sin not: Let not the Sun go down upon your Wrath.

26. Watch over your Passions, that they may be kept under due Government; and as Anger is apt to get the Ascendency, upon every little Provocation, Labour to regulate and restrain it †, that it may not become sinful, either by your being angry, without a Cause, or to answer some bad End; or by letting it rise to Excess, and degenerate into Fury, Rage and Revenge, even when there may be just Occasion for a holy Resentment: And if at any Time it throws you into a wrathful, discomposing Perturbation of Spirit, which is in itself sinful, Be as speedy as possible, in looking up for divine Assistance, and endeavouring to suppress it, and to be reconciled to your Brother, according to our Lord's own Direction, (*Mat.* v. 23, 24. ‖) that it may not rest in your Bosoms, like the Anger of Fools; (*Ec.* vii. 9.) and may by no Means remain with you till Sun-set, to distract your Minds, and unfit them for Evening-prayer, which ought to be *without Wrath and Doubting*; (1 Tim. ii. 8.) nor may lie down with you to disturb your Sleep in the Night, or rise with you the following Day.

27 Neither give Place to the Devil.

27. 'Tis the Work of your great Adversary, the Devil, to irritate and inflame, and keep up turbulent and revengeful Passions, to your own and others Hurt; As ever therefore ye would not suffer Satan to have a Place in your Hearts; nor would gratify him, nor give him an Advantage against you, by yielding to his malicious and destructive Designs; nor would be hurried, through his Instigations, into still greater Sin and Mischief in Word or Deed, Stand upon your Guard against his Temptations whenever ye find your Spirits heated; and resist him stedfastly in the

† *Be ye angry* is not to be taken as an *Exhortation* to Anger, which, alas! we are naturally too prone to of ourselves: And yet it intimates that all Anger in its own Nature is not sinful; but may be allowable upon just Occasions, as it is in itself an innocent Passion, planted in the original Frame of human Nature to be exercised in a proper and decent Manner; and was so, by the blessed and holy Jesus himself. (*Mark* iii. 5.)

‖ *Let not the Sun go down upon your Wrath* seems to be a Sort of *proverbial* Expression, to signify Things that ought to be done without Delay, in Allusion to the Law of God, which order'd the Criminal, that was hanged upon a Tree, to be buried the same Day, and the Hire of a poor Servant not to be kept back till the Sun should go down upon it, *Deut.* xxi. 22, 23, and xxiv. 14, 15. And even *Pythagoras*, a Heathen-Philosopher, injoin'd his Disciples, that after any Quarrel, or contumelious Behaviour thro' Anger, they should shake Hands and become Friends again, before the Sun went down. (See Dr. *Hammond*'s Note here.)

Faith,

Faith, who watches all Occasions to ensnare you, and *walks about as a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour:* (1 Pet. v. 8, 9.) * And take Heed of giving Ear to false Accusers and Slanderers of your Neighbours, who, as Satan's Instruments, would incense you against others without any just Ground; and so would put you upon such unjustifiable Expressions of undue Anger, as might give Occasion to Heathens and Unbelievers of reviling your holy Profession of Christ and his Gospel.

28 *Let him that stole, steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with* his *Hands the Thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.*

28. And if there be any among you, who, before he was brought to the Knowledge of Christ, had accustomed himself, and thought there was no great Harm in it, as some of the Heathens do †, to pilfer, wrong and cheat his Neighbour in a clandestine Manner, to supply his own Wants, or maintain himself in Idleness; or if, even since his Conversion, he retains light Thoughts of this Sin, and continues to be still addicted to it, Let such an one henceforth show that he has so learned Christ, as utterly to abhor and abandon these unrighteous and injurious Practices, which are not only inconsistent with all the Institutions of Christianity; but are destructive of personal Property, and direct Violations of the moral Law, and the common Rights of Mankind: But, on the contrary, let him think it his Duty, and make it his Care and Practice, to lead an honest and useful Life of Labour and Service, according to the Station and Employment, to which God, in his Providence, has called him; and if his Circumstances and Calling be of such a Nature, as require earning his daily Bread with the Sweat of his Brow, (*Gen.* iii. 19.) by any handicraft Trade, or other lawful and commendable, though laborious Business, Let him apply to it with Industry and Pains-taking, that, by the Blessing of God on his honest Endeavours, he may not only get enough for his own and Family's Subsistence, if he has one, and may be under no Temptation to defraud others; but may also have something to spare, on proper Occasions, for relieving the Necessities of the Poor, and especially of such as are of the Houshold of Faith, that they may not be tempted to steal, as he himself formerly was; and that he may be a Blessing, and no longer a Nusance and Burden to civil, or religious Communities.

29 *Let no corrupt Communication pro-*

29. Furthermore, as to your *Words*, as well as your Temper and Actions, Carefully avoid all light and frothy,

* As (διαβολος) the Word here render'd *the Devil* signifies any *false Accuser,* I have, with the *Syriac* Version, *Erasmus*, and others, taken that Sense into the Paraphrase.

† *Stealing* properly signifies *private Thefts* and Frauds, in Distinction from public or violent Robbery; and as in many of the *Gentile*-Nations Theft was thought to be no Sin; so, perhaps, some of the *Ephesian*-Converts had not quite divested themselves of their own immoral Notions about it, nor consequently got thoroughly off from their former habitual Inclinations to it.

and

ceed out of your Mouth, but that which is good to the Use of edifying, that it may minister Grace unto the Hearers.

and especially all profane, indecent, obscene and opprobrious Language, that proceeds from a corrupt Heart, and has a dangerous Tendency to corrupt the Minds and Manners of them that hear it, (1 *Cor.* xv. 33.) Let nothing of this Kind ever, like stinking and infectious Breath, go forth out of your Mouth; but, on the other Hand, let it be always with Grace, as if it were seasoned with Salt, even such as is under the Conduct of a gracious Spirit; and is wise and prudent, opportune and suitable to Persons, Times and Places, and to the Circumstances and Occasions that are before you; and is adapted, in a Way of Counsel, Caution, Reproof, or Consolation, to promote the spiritual Benefit of the Company you converse with, that it may be a Means of recommending Religion to the Hearers, of savourizing their Spirits and giving them a good Turn, of communicating some useful Instruction to them, and of helping forward the Work of Grace in their Hearts.

30 *And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the Day of Redemption.*

30. And as all the Things, which I have been cautioning you against, are directly contrary to the holy Nature, Will and Operations, Gifts and Graces of the good Spirit of God; and as he (speaking after the Manner of Men) is grieved at them, as a Friend uses to be at the disagreeable and ungrateful Behaviour of one, that he dwells with, and has treated with Kindness and Favour, Have a Care, lest by indulging any of them ye offend and rebel against him, as *Israel* did of old, (*Isaiah* lxiii. 10) and provoke him to withdraw his gracious Presence, and deprive you of his Comforts, who is not only infinitely pure and holy in himself, but loves Holiness, and is the Author and Worker of its first Beginnings, and of all its Increases in you; by which, in some remarkable Manifestations and Impressions of Light and Grace, consequent to your first Believing, (see the Note and Paraphrase on *Chap.* i. 13) ye are evidently sealed as with his own Image, and are thereby distinguished for his own, with assuring Tokens of Salvation; and have the Pledge and Earnest of it in yourselves, for your present Security and Comfort, until ye be possessed of the heavenly Inheritance, (*Chap.* i. 14) at Death, when your Souls shall be compleatly delivered from all the Evils ye feel or fear; and at the Day of Judgment, when your Bodies shall be redeemed from the Power of the Grave to a glorious Immortality, that they may share with your Souls in the eternal Happiness, which shall be fully revealed at the final Manifestation of the Sons of God. (*Rom.* viii. 19, 23.)

31 *Let all Bitterness, and Wrath, and Anger, and Clamour, and Evil-speaking be put away from you, with all Malice.*

31. This holy Spirit is also the Spirit of Love and Peace; and therefore as ever ye would not grieve him, and lose his comfortable and sealing Presence, Take special heed that all Rancour, Severity and Sourness of Temper; and all furious, raging and ungovernable Passions; and all causeless and excessive Anger; (see the Note on *ver.* 26.) and all loud Threat-

Threatning and Scolding, noisy Quarrels and Contentions; and all Railings, Defamations and Backbitings, under the Power of a boisterous and tumultuous Mind, either to the Reviling of Men, or to the dishonouring of the Name of God, which may be called a Sort of Blasphemy; (βλασφημία) See that all this be laid aside, discountenanced and removed to the farthest Distance from you, together with all malicious, spiteful, envious and injurious Thoughts, or Heart burnings: Let all these Sorts of Evil be resisted and banished, as highly displeasing to the good Spirit of God, and repugnant to his free and friendly Communion with you.

32 And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's Sake hath forgiven you.

32. On the contrary, as ever ye would hope for his sweet and satisfying Abode with you, Labour, under the Influence, and according to the Mind and Will of this divine Spirit, to cultivate an affectionate, affable and benevolent Disposition and Behaviour, as Persons that take Pleasure in doing all Offices of Kindness and Friendship one towards another *; sympathize with, and shew all Tenderness, Pity and Bowels of Mercy (*Col.* iii. 12) toward the Weak, Afflicted and Discouraged: And if any of your Brethren affront or injure you, don't grow hard-hearted toward them, nor seek a Retaliation, or owe them a Grudge for it; but frankly and freely forget and forgive, and intirely pass it by, in Consideration, and Imitation, of the infinitely greater Forgiveness of the manifold and aggravated Transgressions, which God in the Riches of his Grace has extended to you; and *that* not at so cheap a Rate, as ye are called to forgive your Brethren, which will cost you nothing; but on account of the Death and Sufferings of his own dear Son Jesus Christ, whom he of his mere Favour appointed, provided, gave and sent to make an Atonement by his precious Blood for *them*, as well as for yourselves, that he might freely, fully and honourably forgive both them and you.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How amiable is a holy Conversation, answerable to the Nature and Design of that happy State, into which God calls his People by his Grace! Nothing can be a greater Credit to us, than to be of an humble, meek, calm and patient Temper, bearing with and forbearing our Fellow-Christians in Love, and studiously pursuing, as with one Heart and Soul, the Things that make for mutual Harmony and Peace. How great are the Obligations to Christian-Love and Unity among true Believers of every Denomination! They are all Members of the same mystical Body of Christ; animated by one and the same holy Spirit; Partakers of one Hope of the heavenly Inheritance; related to and interested in one Lord and Saviour; agreed in the same fundamental Doctrines of Faith; under the same baptismal Engagements; and have all one and the same Covenant-God and Father, who is infinitely above them all, and dwells in them all by his Spirit. And what may we not hope for from the exalted Redeemer! He,

* *One another* (ἑαυτοῖς) is put for ἀλλήλοις here, and *Chap.* v. 19 *Col.* iii. 16, and seems to be so, *Jude*, ver. 20, 21, and, perhaps, *Phil.* ii. 22.

who, by divine Dispensation, descended from Heaven to the deepest Humiliation and Sufferings on Earth, is now ascended to the Heaven of Heavens, as a triumphant Conqueror over all his and our Enemies. And with what bounteous Favour does he scatter his Ascension-Gifts among the Children of Men! He lives and reigns in all his Glory, to fill his Church and every Member of it with various Gifts and Graces. And what ample Care has he taken of them in the Institution of a Gospel-Ministry! He gave and furnished out Apostles, Prophets and Evangelists, as long as Occasions required such extraordinary and inspired Officers; and he appoints and qualifies Pastors and Teachers, as ordinary Officers, to continue to the End of the World, that, by means of their Ministrations, he may carry on the Designs of his Kingdom and Grace, and the Good of his People through all Generations. How important then is the Work of the Ministry! 'Tis for filling up the Church with Converts, and bringing them into Gospel-order; and for edifying all its Members in Knowledge, Faith and Love, and every other Grace, and establishing their Minds and Hearts, that they may be guarded against the Artifices of subtle Deceivers, and not fluctuate, like Children, between Truth and Error; but may grow up in all Things into Christ, who is their Head, and may derive all Supplies from him, till they attain the compleat Stature of Manhood in him. But what a deplorable State of Ignorance, Sin and Ruin are we in, 'till Grace makes a holy and happy Change upon us, by means of the Gospel! Our Understandings are darkned thro' wilful Ignorance, and we are Strangers and averse to the divine Life, through the Obstinacy of our own perverse Hearts. How should we dread adding Sin to Sin, lest we provoke the just and holy God to leave us to ourselves, till we become utterly insensible of our Guilt and Danger, and run into all Iniquity with Greediness! But the true Knowledge of Christ has a quite contrary Tendency and Effect; and if we know him, and the Truth as 'tis in him, under the Light and Influence of his Spirit, it will effectually restrain us from all known Iniquity. How odious is *the old Man*, the Body of Sin; and how resolutely should Believers set themselves against it! 'Tis abominable, corrupt and deceiving in its various Lusts, as appears from the Conversation of unregenerate Sinners; it perverts and inflames their Passions, and fills them with bitter Anger, Wrath and Malice; it carries them into Deceit and Lying, Idleness, Frauds and Thefts; renders their Discourse unsavory and defiling, clamorous and injurious to their Neighbours; and is a Gratification of the Devil, and an Offence to the holy Spirit of God. But how excellent is the *New Man*, which Believers are cloathed with, as with a beautiful Garment! 'Tis a Renewal of the Spirit of our Minds, and a new Creation, according to the Image of God in Righteousness and true Holiness; it subdues our wrathful Passions, and will by no Means suffer them to rest in our Bosom, but gives them a softening Turn into all Kindness, Tenderness and Forgiveness of Offences; it makes us honest, upright and faithful in all our Dealings, and industrious in the Business of Life, to which God calls us; it brings our Lips under the Law of Truth, and renders our Converses good and edifying. And how should Christians be excited to such a Temper and Conduct, that they may not grieve the holy Spirit of God, whereby they are sealed to the Day of Redemption; but may act according to the endearing Obligations of the superlative Love of God, who for Christ's Sake forgives them all Trespasses!

CHAP. V.

The Apostle concludes his Exhortation to brotherly Love, 1, 2. *Repeats his Caution against several Sins, as particularly against all Uncleanness, Covetousness and Drunkenness, with a Variety of Arguments to inforce the Caution, and direct to a contrary Behaviour,* 3—20. *And exhorts to the relative Duties of Society in general* 21. *And of Wives and Husbands in particular, which are illustrated and inforced by the spiritual Relation, that is between Christ and the Church,* 22—33.

TEXT.

TEXT.	PARAPHRASE.
1 BE *ye therefore Followers of God, as dear Children.*	1. SINCE therefore * God is so exceedingly good and merciful, in the Exercise of his pardoning Grace toward you, (*Chap.* iv. 32.) Let this excite you to be studious Imitators of him, in exercising all Kindness and Forgiveness one towards another, as becomes Children of his own Likeness, begotten as well as adopted by him, beloved of him and loving him, and delighting to resemble him, especially in those amiable Graces, and to approve yourselves to him, who is Love, and is so much pleased with this Part of his Image, that he who *dwells in Love, dwells in God, and God in him.* (1 John iv. 16.)
2 *And walk in Love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an Offering, and a Sacrifice, to God for a sweet-smelling Savour.*	2. And as the Example of your heavenly Father should induce and animate you to this noble Duty: so should the Example of Christ, that your whole Conversation, all your Lives long even unto Death, may be friendly and affectionate one towards another, from a Principle of Love to God and Christ, without Distinction of Parties, on Account of some being *Jewish* and others *Gentile* converts; even as Christ himself has with superlative Condescension and Grace first loved one, as well as another of us, who believe in him; and has given the most affecting and astonishing Proof of it, in his freely becoming our Substitute, and yielding up his great and infinite Self to the most terrible Death for us, as an expiatory Sacrifice to satisfy divine Justice, and make Atonement for our Sins, when *through the eternal Spirit he offered himself without Spot to God.* (*Heb.* ix. 14.) This was so highly pleasing and acceptable in his Sight, as may be called an Offering and a Sacrifice of a sweet-smelling Savour, in Allusion to the typical Burnt-offerings and Sin-offerings, to make Atonement, (*Gen.* viii. 20, 21. and *Lev.* iv. 31.) which are all now fulfilled, with the richest Advantage and Efficacy, in the Sacrifice of Christ.
3 *But Fornication, and all Uncleanness, or Covetousness let it not be once named amongst you, as becometh Saints;*	3. But, to return, there are several other Sins, besides those afore-mentioned, (*Chap.* iv. 25, *&c.*) that are practised among the Heathens, and too much in Vogue at *Ephesus*, which I would further caution you against; as particularly against the Sin of Whoredom between Persons of contrary Sexes, whether in the single or married Life; (See the Note on 1 *Cor.* v. 1.) and against all Manner of Indecency, Immodesty and Lewdness in Gesture, Looks, Dress and Actions, that betray an unchaste Disposition of Heart, and have a Tendency to excite the like in others; Or, to carry the Matter still further, I would caution you against irre-

* This, as is intimated by the Particle *therefore*, is an Inference from the last Verse of the preceding Chapter, which might have been better continued to the End of the second Verse of this Chapter, where the Apostle shuts up his Argument then in Hand.

gular and immodest Desires after forbidden Objects, and an inordinate Love to, and Pursuit after the Things of this World, that would put you upon gaining them by dishonourable and unjust Means; or would make you discontented without them, and unwilling, when ye have them, to use and part with them for the Glory of God, and the Good of others; Let it never be said that any of you are guilty of either of these Vices; No, nor let them be so much as mentioned among you without the utmost Detestation, as ever ye would behave like Christians that are indeed renewed and sanctified, and ought to be chaste and pure in Body and Mind, and devoted to God, according to your holy Profession, as Saints.

4 Neither Filthiness, nor foolish Talking, nor jesting which are not convenient: but rather giving of Thanks.

4. Nor let there be among you any shameful Practices in secret, the very naming of which would put a modest Person to the Blush; nor any light, wanton or obscene Ways of talking, bantering or joking, which are so far from innocent Pleasantry, and lawful Jests, that they are not only unprofitable and vain, but very offensive to God, and unsufferable to a chaste Ear, and are too great an Incentive to impure Thoughts and Actions: Ye therefore ought to have nothing to do with them; but, on the contrary, should accustom yourselves to employ your Tongues in speaking well of God, with grateful Acknowledgments of his Goodness, and in Thankfulness and Praise for his wondrous Works of Providence and Grace, which would be honourable to him, and improving to your Company, as well as to yourselves; and would be a happy Means of guarding you against impure Language, and all the forementioned abominable Iniquities, which are of the most pernicious Consequence.

5 For this ye know, that no Whoremonger, nor unclean Person, nor covetous Man who is an Idolater, hath any Inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God.

5. For since ye have learned Christ, (*Chap.* iv. 20, 21.) ye can't but know, and ye ought seriously to reflect upon it, that, according to the holy Nature and Design of the Christian-Religion, no Person whatsoever, who is addicted to, and lives and allows himself in the Practice of Whoredom; nor any one who indulges to any Sort of impure Affections, and lascivious Actions; nor any worldly minded covetous Wretch, who makes Mammon his God, and is, by just Construction, an Idolater, as he is supremely fond of earthly Treasures, and rates his Happiness by them, and sets them up in his Heart in the Room of God, and makes an Idol of his Riches, or other worldly Enjoyments, like one intirely devoted to them; No such Person, whatsoever his Profession or Pretences be, while he remains impenitent and persists in either of these Sins, has any Right or Claim to, or, living and dying in that State, shall ever have any Lot or Portion in that pure, incorruptible and undefiled Inheritance of all Blessedness, Honour and Delight, (1 *Pet.* i. 4.) which consists in the Enjoyment of God, and of Christ,

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who is one God with the Father *; and which pertains to the Subjects of the Kingdom of Grace here, and of Glory hereafter, which Christ, in a Way of Purchase, and God the Father in a Way of free Gift, on his Account, has prepared to be the *Inheritance of the Saints in Light*, (Col. i. 12. and see *Rev.* xxi. 27.)

6 Let no Man deceive you with vain Words: for because of these Things cometh the Wrath of God upon the Children of Disobedience.

6. Take heed that no one, either through the Subtilties of *Gentile*-philosophy, or through *Jewish* false Glosses on the Law of God, or through Importunity, or any artful Management, impose upon and delude you by plausible, tho' empty and fallacious Ways of talking about these Crimes, as if there were not that Evil in them, which I have reminded you of, and ye well know to be true; (*v.* 5.) or as if ye might go on in them with Impunity, and without Danger: For, whatever they may pretend, 'tis certain that these are such abominable Iniquities, as not only exclude the Practisers of them from the Kingdom of Heaven; but likewise provoke and bring down the Wrath of God in awful Instances here, and for ever in full Vials hereafter, like rushing Cataracts upon rebellious Sinners, who, as Sons of Unbelief and Disobedience, (ἀπειθείας) *a very froward Generation, Children in whom is no Faith*, (Deut. xxxii. 20.) obstinately persist in them, not only in direct Contradiction to the Gospel, but even to the *moral Law* itself.

7 Be not ye therefore Partakers with them.

7. Stand therefore upon your Guard, and beg Assistance from above, that ye may never be the Partners and Companions of such abandoned Creatures, nor even countenance them in their evil Courses, much less conform to them; lest ye also be Partakers of their Plagues, which, by the just Judgment of God, will be inflicted upon them.

8 For ye were sometimes Darkness, but now are ye Light in the Lord: walk as Children of Light:

8. For ye were indeed formerly, during your *Gentile* and unconverted State, as blind as others; as ignorant and dark in your Minds with regard to the true Knowledge of God, and of spiritual and holy Things, as Darkness itself; and ye then walked in the Ways of Sin, which were all Darkness, (1 *John* i. 6. and ii. 9.) and in which a Man *knoweth not whither he goes*; (John xii. 35. and 1 John ii. 11.) and therefore 'tis no Wonder that ye then went on in the high Road to Destruction †. But now, upon your be-

* *Christ* is here distinguished, as *Mediator*, from *God the Father*, according to our Version of the Words *the Kingdom of Christ and of God*. But as the Kingdom *is one*, and is said to be equally the Kingdom both of *Christ* and of *God*, this (as *Zanchy* observes) intimates, that he is one and the same God with the Father, as well as that there is no Admission into the Kingdom of God but by Christ. And *Beza* notes that there is but one Article prefix'd to Christ and God; [illegible] and so it might be render'd *the Kingdom of Christ, even of God*, or the *Kingdom of Christ, [illegible] God*.

† As *Darkness* and *Light* are used in Scripture to signify *Sin* and *Holiness*, as well as [illegible] and [illegible], or *Ignorance* and *Knowledge*, which is the Light that makes manifest, *ver.* 13. both Senses are included in the Paraphrase, as being adapted to represent the former and the present State of the *Ephesians*, and the Nature and Design of the Argument in Hand. Accordingly *the Children of Light* stand opposed in this Verse to the *Children of Disobedience*, ver. 6, and both are *Hebraisms* to signify Persons, that are under the Power of Darkness and Disobedience, as tho' they were *born of them* respectively; and that are addicted and affected toward them, and take Pleasure in them, as Children naturally do in their Parents.

ing in Christ and embracing the Gospel, the Case is happily altered with you: A divine and spiritual Light hath shone into, and fill'd your Minds, to give you a discerning of the Truth as it is in Jesus; and divine Grace has wrought your Hearts and Lives into a Conformity to that Truth: (*Chap.* iv. 20, 21.) Ye have all Light and Purity in the Lord, as your Head of Wisdom and Influence; and ye have the Light of Knowledge and of Grace by Derivation from him, and by the Influence of his Spirit, (*v.* 9.) as ye are united to him; and so your former sinful Ways are utterly unbecoming your present State and Character. 'Tis therefore both your Duty and Privilege to live and act, with Perseverance and daily Advances, in all your Walk before God, like Children of Light, that are brought under a new Direction, and into a new Sphere of holy Action, and take Pleasure in it, as is suitable to those that are enlightened by the Word and Spirit of Christ, and have the best Assistances for behaving accordingly.

9 (*For the Fruit of the Spirit* is *in all Goodness, and Righteousness, and Truth*)

9. For the true and genuine Fruit, which is produced, cherished and perfected by the Light and Influence of the Spirit of the Lord, is all holy *. It consists of every Thing that is good and excellent in its own Nature, and beneficial to others, as well as yourselves, in Opposition to Covetousness, (*v.* 3.) which is evil in itself, as 'tis practical Idolatry, (*v.* 5.) and turns to no good, but very bad Account, as it is a *with-holding more than is meet, and tends to Poverty*: (Prov. xi. 24.) The Fruit of the Spirit also consists of every Thing that is right, and just, and due, in all your Behaviour toward God and Man; and includes all Purity of Heart and Life, in Opposition to all Uncleanness, (*v.* 3, 4, 5.) whereby we defile ourselves, and are injurious to others: And it consists of an Adherence to the Light and Truth of the Gospel, which has irradiated your Minds, in Opposition to Ignorance and Error, in which ye formerly were involved, as in the thickest Darkness; (*v.* 8.) and consists of all Integrity and Faithfulness in whatsoever ye say or do, in Opposition to lying and Falshood, which I have also cautioned you against: (*Ch.* iv. 25.) Ye therefore being Partakers of these excellent Fruits of the Spirit, your Conversation ought to be always of a Piece answerable to them, like those that live and walk in the Light *. (*v.* 8.)

10 *Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.*

10. Ye ought by the Assistance, and in the Light of the Spirit, to try and prove what is the Mind and Will of God in his Word, that ye may know, and be satisfied about

* This Verse is brought in, by way of Parenthesis, with such a Description of *the Fruits of the Spirit*, as falls in with the Apostle's main Design of enforcing his Exhortation to *walk in the Light*; and then he returns to shew how that Walk is to be pursued in the 10th Verse, which stands connected with the 8th.

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what is pleaſing to him, and may heartily approve of it and be conformed to it; and that ye may exhibit a fair View of it in your Walk, and give Proof to others of your conſcientious Regard to it; and may approve yourſelves to the Lord Chriſt, and to the Father through him, in performing the acceptable and perfect Will of God, which is your reaſonable Service, (*Rom.* xii. 1, 2.)

11. *And have no Fellowſhip with the unfruitful Works of Darkneſs, but rather reprove them.*

11. And that ye may walk as becomes the Children of Light, Have no Manner of Partnerſhip with, nor give the leaſt Countenance or Encouragement to iniquitous Practices of any Kind whatſoever, which are *unfruitful Works*, as they are not only unprofitable, but exceedingly injurious; (*Rom.* vi. 21) and are ſo very ſhameful, that they alſo may well be called *Works of Darkneſs*, as they are committed only by Perſons of dark and ignorant Minds, and will not bear the Light of a ſtrict Scrutiny of Conſcience, much leſs the Light of God's Word and of a future Judgment, to bring them to the Teſt of Truth and Righteouſneſs; and as they are often committed in the Darkneſs of the Night, or of Privacy to hide them from open View, and finally lead to *the Blackneſs of Darkneſs for ever, which is reſerved unto the Ungodly.* (Jude *ver.* 13.) But inſtead of going into, or being any way acceſſary to theſe evil Practices, let it be your Concern and Endeavour, as becomes thoſe that are *Light in the Lord*, to *rebuke your Brother, and not ſuffer Sin upon him*; to ſhew him, in the moſt convincing Manner, how wicked and dangerous the Works of Darkneſs are, that he may be aſhamed of them; and to put a Check upon them by friendly, kind and prudent Admonitions of thoſe that are guilty of them; and eſpecially by your own circumſpect and exemplary Converſation in the ſhining Beauties of Holineſs, which will expoſe their Deformity in their own proper Colours, and will carry a practical and moſt inoffenſive and unexceptionable, tho' touching Confutation, Reproof and Condemnation of all contrary Courſes, as ſinful and provoking to God, and unſuitable to the holy Profeſſion of his Name.

12. *For it is a Shame even to ſpeak of thoſe Things which are done of them in Secret.*

12. For it would be a Reproach upon a Chriſtian's Character, and would even *ſhock* a religious, ſober and modeſt Mind, ſo much as to mention ſome vile and deteſtable Things, † unleſs in a Way of neceſſary Reproof for them, that are committed by Perſons of corrupt Minds, with the greateſt Secrecy and in the Dark, as being themſelves aſhamed of having them known to others, leſt they ſhould expoſe their own Characters; not conſidering that God ſees

† Some think that by the Things *done in ſecret* the Apoſtle refers to the ſhocking, abominable and filthy Practices, that the Heathens were guilty of in the ſecret Acts of their idolatrous Worſhip, and that were not to be divulged to others: But, be that as it will, they are evidently to be underſtood, in a wider Extent, for all unfruitful Works of Darkneſs ſpoken of in the foregoing Verſe.

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them, how much ſoever they may be concealed from the Eyes of Men; and that he will bring them to Light, and take ſevere Vengeance for them in the Day of Judgment. (1 *Cor.* iv. 5.)

13 *But all Things that are reproved, are made manifeſt by the Light: For whatſoever doth make manifeſt, is Light.*

13. But ye, who are now Light in the Lord, (*ver.* 8) are by this Means enabled to judge of, and condemn the Deformity and Miſchief of all theſe ſinful Practices, that are too vile to bear the Light, and are reproved by the Light of God's Word and Spirit, and of your good Converſation in Chriſt: For as whatſover renders Objects viſible, in their true State, is Light; ſo that which has diſcover'd to you the Odiouſneſs, Guilt and Danger of theſe ſhameful Immoralities, and given you a View of them in their own hideous Colours, to make you renounce, abhor and condemn them, is Light indeed; 'tis the Light and Knowledge of Chriſt and of his Word, which has ſhone in your Hearts, and makes you ſhine as Lights in the World, that by your good Counſel, and good Works, ye may convince wicked Men, and ſhame them out of their Deeds of Darkneſs, which they did not ſee the Evil of before. This is the excellent Light that ye are brought into, and are called to walk in.

14 *Wherefore he ſaith, Awake, thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the Dead, and Chriſt ſhall give thee Light.*

14. Therefore, to ſhew that ye, even the *Gentiles* among you, are now brought into this happy State;* As our bleſſed Lord, in raiſing the Dead, ſaid to a *young Woman*, and to a *young Man*, *Ariſe*, (Mark v. 41, and Luke vii. 14) and to *Lazarus*, *Come forth*; (John xi. 43) ſo God ſays in the Current of the Old-Teſtament Prophecies about his calling the *Gentiles*, with a Deſign of exerting divine Energy with his Call to make it effectual; Awake out of your State of

* Various are the Conjectures of Expoſitors about the *Connection* of theſe Words, whether it ſhould be with *ver.* 8, or *ver.* 11, or with the next preceding Verſe; and about what is meant by *he ſays*, whether it refers to *Chriſt's ſpeaking by the Apoſtle*, as he did by the antient Prophets, who often introduced their Meſſages with a *thus ſaith the Lord*, and with Intimations that he ſpake by them; or whether it refers to any *particular Paſſage* in *the Old Teſtament*, or in *the Apocryphal* Writings, or to *the general Doctrine* of the Old Teſtament-Prophecies, relating to the Calling of the *Gentiles*. And they are much divided in their Sentiments about the Difference, that may be ſuppoſed between *awaking out of Sleep*, and *riſing from the Dead*, whether the firſt of theſe Phraſes may, or may not relate to *ſlumbering Believers*, and the ſecond to *unregenerate Sinners*. But amidſt all the Difficulty of adjuſting theſe Things, what appears to me to be moſt eaſy and natural is, that the *Connection* ſtands with the next preceding Verſe, which ſpeaks of *Light*, as that which *makes manifeſt*; and ſo this Verſe is brought in to ſhew that the *Epheſians*, though *Gentiles*, were, according to antient Prophecies, Partakers of a ſpiritual Light: And *he ſays* ſeems to relate to the Sum, or *general Current* of what God had ſaid in Prophecy about the Converſion of the *Gentiles*, as particularly in *Iſ.* vi. 1, 2, 3, and ix. 2, and xlix 6; But there is no particular Paſſage in any of *the Prophets*, no, nor in any *Apocryphal* Book, as far as I find, that anſwers to this Quotation; and the Stile, *he ſays*, I think is never uſed by the Apoſtle to ſignify what God, or Chriſt, or the Spirit ſaid by *him*. As to *awaking out of Sleep*, and *riſing from the Dead*, I take them to be Terms of much *the ſame Import*, ſince Death is frequently repreſented under the Image of *Sleep*, and is called *the Sleep of Death*; (Pſ. xiii. 3) accordingly we often read of Perſons *ſleeping with their Fathers*; and *awaking out of this Sleep* is the very ſame Thing with *riſing from the Dead*, as in 2 *Kings* iv. 31, *Dan.* xii. 2, and *John* xi. 11; And both theſe Expreſſions, if we conſider them as what God ſaid by the Prophets, with reſpect to the Calling of the *Gentiles*, relate to their State and Condition, not *after* they were called by Grace, but *before*, to bring them out of that deplorable State; in which, and never afterward, they were ſaid to be *dead in Treſpaſſes, and Sins.* (Chap. ii. 1.)

Ignorance, Stupidity and Inſenſibility; and riſe up from the Death in Treſpaſſes and Sins, in which you have hitherto lain, but from which I will quicken you by an almighty Power attending my Word of Command; and Chriſt, *who is a Light to the* Gentiles, *and my Salvation to the Ends of the Earth*, (Iſa. xlix. 6) ſhall enlighten you with ſpiritual Wiſdom and Underſtanding, to ſhew you the Way to eternal Life; and ſhall give you the Comfort of both the Light of Knowledge, and of Holineſs and Hope, in your own Soul.

15 *See then that ye walk circumſpectly, not as Fools, but as Wiſe,*

15. Look then to yourſelves, and ſee how carefully, exactly and accurately (πως ακριβως) ye ought to walk in the whole of your Converſation, as Chriſtian-Converts, that it be anſwerable to your new Light and Obligations, and according to the Rule of the Word, as Perſons under the Eye of God and Men, of Enemies as well as Friends, that your Behaviour may not ſtill be like ignorant, injudicious and unwiſe People, that are eſtranged from the Knowledge of Chriſt, and from the Way of their Duty and Happineſs, and heedleſsly plunge themſelves into Iniquity and Error to their own Deſtruction; but like Perſons, that have learned Chriſt, and been taught by him as the Truth is in Jeſus, (*Chap.* iv. 20, 21) who hath given you Light; (*ver.* 14) and like Perſons, that take heed of giving any Occaſion for Stumbling, or Triumph to Unbelievers, or of imprudently and unneceſſarily expoſing yourſelves to their Rage, and running into Danger.

16 *Redeeming the Time, becauſe the Days are evil.*

16. And ſee that, by a diligent and circumſpect Walk, ye redeem Time, and Opportunity, (τον καιρον) and retrieve what has been loſt, for the beſt Purpoſes, that it may be employed in a holy Manner for the Glory of God and the Benefit of your own Souls, and for doing Good to others: And as Merchants improve all advantageous Seaſons for Traffick; ſo be ye as it were continually buying and gaining theſe precious Talents (εξαγοραζομενοι) out of the Hands of Sin and Satan, to which they formerly were devoted; out of the Hands of Sloth, Eaſe and worldly Buſineſs and Pleaſure; and out of the Hands of your Enemies, that would be glad to take away your Liberty and your Lives: And ye ought to be the more careful herein, becauſe the Times, in which ye live, are Days of great Immorality, Ignorance and Profaneneſs, and Days of Trouble, Danger and Perſecution for the Sake of Chriſt, which may ſoon bring all Time, and Opportunities of Service to a Period with you; and they are Days, in which both carnal *Jews* and *Gentiles* continually watch for your halting, that they may ſpeak Evil againſt you, and againſt Chriſt and his Goſpel on your Account.

17 ***Wherefore, be ye not unwiſe, but underſtanding what the Will of the Lord*** is.

17. Take heed therefore that ye do not continue to act an inconſiderate fooliſh Part, as in the Days of your Ignorance and Unregeneracy, in Things relating to God and

2 your

your own Duty and Salvation; nor needlesly expose yourselves to the Malice and Fury of your Enemies in these evil Days: But, suitable to your present State and Character, Endeavour, through divine Grace, to live and act, as those that understand, and attentively consider the Mind and Will of the Lord Christ, with respect to the Cautiousness and Prudence of your Behaviour, that ye may *be wise as Serpents, and harmless as Doves*; (Mat. x. 16.) and with respect to the Purity of your Conversation in the World, that it may be blameless, becoming Saints, and such as is acceptable to the Lord, and as he requires in his Word, (v. 3, 4, 10.)

18. And be not drunk with Wine, wherein is Excess; but be filled with the Spirit:

18. And to prevent your running into the abominable Practices, that I have been already cautioning you against, Take heed of another flagrant Sin, which is not only in itself a rioting upon the Bounties of Providence, and an unmanly and worse than brutal Vice, but throws one off from his Guard, and exposes him to every Temptation to Lasciviousness, and all other shameful Iniquities; and *that* is Drunkenness *, by so free a Use of Wine or other strong intoxicating Liquors, as is injurious to Health, or clouds the Mind, and enfeebles, defiles and disorders all the Powers of the Soul, and renders them incapable of rational, holy and regular Conduct; and is attended with, or prompts unto, all Excess (ἀσωτία) of Intemperance and Madness, Rioting and Debauchery, and all Superfluity of Naughtiness. But, in Opposition to the sordid and injurious Pleasure of drinking to Excess, Let it be your great Concern that, in the Use of all proper and appointed Means, ye may be filled with the holy Influences, Gifts and Graces, Joys and Consolations of the divine Spirit, wherein there can be no Danger of having too much, or of being misled into any indecent or unworthy Behaviour by them. This, instead of carrying you into Revellings and all Extravagancies of Mirth and Jollity, will inspire you with a noble, pure and sublime Pleasure, which should vent itself in a suitable Manner;

19. Speaking to yourselves in Psalms, and Hymns, and spiritual Songs, singing and making Melody in your Heart to the Lord,

19. Speaking among yourselves, to your mutual Edification and Admonition, (*Col.* iii. 16) by singing forth the Praises of God, in all the Variety of them, at your religious Assemblies, by joining your Voices in proper Tunes, to utter poetic Compositions, such as Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs †, whether those that are already left, under divine Inspiration, for the Use of the Church, or those that in-

* *Drunkenness* was a reigning Sin at *Ephesus*, and a Vice that the *Gentiles* were scandalously guilty of in some of their idolatrous Feasts, as particularly in that, which they celebrated in Honour of *Bacchus*, whom they esteemed as *the God of Wine*.

† Some have observed that, tho' most of *David*'s poetical Compositions for the Use of the Church are called in their Titles *Psalms*; yet the Word used in the Title of *Psalm* cxlv, tho' render'd there a *Psalm*

inspired Men among you may give out by an extraordinary Gift of the Spirit, suitable to present Occasions: All which are to be sung in a spiritual Manner for spiritual Ends; and your united Praises, *with the Voice together*, (Isa. lii. 8) should be with the sweetest Harmony and Delight in your own Hearts, by their ascending with your Voices to the Lord Jesus, and shewing forth his Glory, and the Glory of God in him, which will be as pleasing to him, and to your own Souls, as the most melodious Musick can be to your Ears.

20 *Giving Thanks always for all Things unto God and the Father, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

20. And the Work of Praise should not only bear a Part in the solemn Worship of your religious Assemblies; but should run through your whole Lives, that ye may always maintain a grateful Disposition of Heart, and may *bless the Lord at all Times, and his Praise may be continually in your Mouths*, (Ps. xxxiv. 1) for every Mercy, spiritual and temporal, and for every Dispensation of Providence and Grace, yea, for Afflictions themselves, as they work together for Good, as well as for Enjoyments, and sensible Tokens of divine Favour: And so ye ought, on all Occasions, to express your Thankfulness for all Things, to God even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our Father in him, as the original Source and first Cause of all the good Things, which we have and hope for: And this Thanksgiving should be render'd to him through our Lord Jesus Christ, (*Col.* iii. 17) with a Dependence on him, and Mention of his Name, as our only Mediator, and the Purchaser of all Blessings, on whose Account they are bestowed upon us; and through whom our Praises, as well as Prayers for them, are to be presented, and are made acceptable to God. (*Heb.* xiii. 15, and 1 *Pet.* ii. 5.)

21 *Submitting yourselves one to another in the Fear of God.*

21. And these divine Influences (*ver.* 18) will direct and oblige, assist and enable you to behave in a becoming Manner, in all natural and civil, public and private Relations of Life*, according to the Rank, which ye respectively bear in

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Psalm, signifies also, and is sometimes render'd by the *Seventy*, a *Hymn*; and the Titles of *Ps.* cxx—cxxxiv signify, and are render'd *a Song*. But possibly the *Hymns* and *Spiritual Songs* here meant, in Distinction from *Psalms*, might signify such divine Odes, or poetic Compositions, as our Lord is thought by some to have deliver'd at the Institution of his Supper, *Matth.* xxvi. 30, and as the Songs of *Elizabeth*, the Virgin *Mary*, *Zacharias*, and others spoken of in 1 *Cor.* xiv. 26.

* The *Jews* had such contemptible Thoughts of the uncircumcised *Gentiles*, as to imagine that they were not bound to perform those Duties toward them, that belong'd to the nearest Relations in Life; and it seems as if some such Notion had obtain'd among *Judaizing* Christians, with regard to *uncircumcised Believers*; and among Converts from Heathenism, with regard to *unbelieving* Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants; with a View to which, the Apostle establishes the Obligations resulting from all these Relations, whether both Parties were Believers or not, in a Discourse at large, 1 *Cor.* Chap. vii: And with the like View, he may be supposed in this and the next Chapter to insist on the Duties of *Husbands* and *Wives*, *Parents* and *Children*, *Masters* and *Servants*, that Believers might not think themselves releas'd from the Duties, which result from either of these Relations, even supposing, that it subsisted between them and such as were Unbelievers: And the same may be observed with respect to the Obedience, that was due to *Heathen Magistrates*, and the

in them, that ye all may perform those mutual Duties one towards another, which belong to your several Stations, as Persons that have an Awe of God upon your Consciences, and are afraid of offending him, who has enjoin'd these Duties upon you; and as Persons that are under the Government of his New-covenant-fear in your Hearts, to keep you from sinning against him, and to engage you to submit one to another in every thing that he has commanded, and as far as may be for his Glory, and consistent with other Duties that ye owe to him, whose absolute Supremacy claims a prior and unreserved Submission to him.

22 *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own Husbands, as unto the Lord.*

22. As to instance particularly in some *relative* Duties, Let those of you, that are believing *Wives*, pay all becoming Reverence and Honour, Subjection and Obedience, in all lawful Things, to your Husbands, whom ye should consider and esteem, and be the more chearfully submissive to, as your own Husbands, who by the Law of Marriage are and ought to be for you, and no other Woman, only beloved of you, and loving you †: And let all your Acts herein be as in the Sight and Presence of the Lord-Christ, with an Eye to his Glory, as also in Obedience to his Authority, (1 *Cor.* xiv. 34) and in Resemblance of that Subjection, which the Church owes to him, and by which this Duty is illustrated and inforced upon you.

23 *For the Husband is the Head of the Wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church: And he is the Saviour of the Body.*

23. For by the Law of *Nature* and of *Marriage*, (see *Gen.* iii. 16, 1 *Cor.* xi. 8, 9, and 1 *Tim.* ii. 13, 14) the Husband is appointed to be the Head, Guide and Guardian of the Wife, in a somewhat-like Manner, as, by the Constitution of the new Covenant, Christ in his Office-Capacity is the Head, Governor and Protector of the whole Church, which is espoused unto him; and suitable to this near and

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the Offices of Love and Kindness, that were to be discharged towards all Ranks and Degrees of Persons, whatsoever their Characters or Professions might be as to Religion; which he also insisted on at large in the xiiith Chapter to the *Romans*, All this is designed to shew that Christian-Religion is so far from dissolving, that it confirms and inforces Obligations to Duties of all natural and civil Relations. And if these relative Duties were to be observed, even towards Heathens and Unbelievers, much more must they be binding upon Christians one towards another (See the Note 1 *Tim.* vi. 1.)

† The Apostle's Discourse (as *Zanchy* observes) on particular relative Duties, is in the natural Order, in which the Relations themselves commenced in the World, which was first between *Husband and Wife*; next between *Parents and Children*; and lastly between *Masters and Servants*. The Apostle accordingly begins with the Duties of the first of these Relations in this Chapter, and goes on to those of *Parents and Children*, and *Masters and Servants* in the next; and he keeps the same Order in his Exhortations to all these in his Epistle to the *Colossians*, Chap. iii. 18—25, and iv. 1, &c. But it may be farther observed that, in both these Epistles, he first insists on the Duties of the *inferior*, and then on those of the *superior* Relatives in every Instance of them. And the Apostle *Peter* proceeds in the same Order, when he speaks of the Duties of *Wives and Husbands*, 1 *Pet.* iii. 1—7. The Reasons of this may probably be, because the Duties of *Wives, Children and Servants* are most against the Grain of corrupt Nature, most difficult in themselves; and most apt to be objected against, and not so readily attended to, and complied with; and because, if these Relatives faithfully perform the Duties on their Part, it would lay a more endearing Obligation upon *Husbands, Parents* and *Masters* to treat their *Wives, Children* and *Servants* with Love and Tenderness, and would leave them the more shamefully inexcusable, were they to be wanting in their Duty toward them. Hence the Apostle *Peter*, in the Place but now referr'd to, exhorts believing *Wives* to *win their Husbands* by a becoming Spirit and Conversation.

tender Relation, into which he has taken them, he has acted the Part of a kind and faithful Husband in being the Redeemer, and Saviour of all the Members of his mystical Body, to deliver them from Sin and Wrath, and secure eternal Happiness to them; and has therein set all Christian-husbands a bright and noble Pattern of that Affection, Care and Concern, which they ought to have for the Safety and Defence, Maintenance, Comfort and Happiness of their Wives, (*ver.* 25, 28, *&c.*)

24 *Therefore, as the Church is subject unto Christ, so* let *the Wives* be *to their own Husbands in every Thing.*

24. As therefore the Church is chearfully and faithfully subject to the Authority of Christ in all spiritual Concerns; so in Imitation of them, (though not with the same absolute and unlimited Subjection to any Creature, as is due to Christ himself) Let the Wives behave with Meekness, Willingness and Fidelity, in a becoming Subjection to their own lawful Husbands in all civil Things, as far as is fit in the Lord. (*Col.* iii. 18.)

25 *Husbands, love your Wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it;*

25. On the other hand, Husbands should consider, and faithfully discharge their Duty toward their Wives, as it is all comprehended in the great Law of Love, which sweetens the Relation, and has the most powerful Influence to command a friendly and becoming Behaviour in it. Let those of you then; that are believing Husbands, take heed of tyrannizing over your Wives, or being imperious, morose, or passionate and bitter against them; (*Col.* iii. 19.) but make their Yoke as easy and agreeable as possible, and allure them, by a kind and gentle Carriage, to all the Respect and Obedience, that is reasonable for you to expect from them: See that ye give Honour to them, (1 *Pet.* iii. 7.) and that your Hearts be full of, and all your Looks, Words and Actions shew forth, the most tender, ardent and endearing Love to them, in bearing with their Infirmities, and doing all that in you lies for their temporal and spiritual Good, and for convincing them of your peculiar Affection to them: And ye should herein imitate, and be influenced by, the special and superlative Love of Christ to his Church, who has given the most affecting and unparallel'd Demonstration of his peculiar Love to them, that possibly can be, in that he freely yielded himself up to the worst of Deaths in their Room and Stead, and for their spiritual and eternal Benefit;

26 *That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of Water, by the Word,*

26. That he might take away the Power and Pollution of Sin from all its Members, and infuse a Principle of true Holiness into them, and so consecrate them to God by the Sanctification of his Spirit, as (Καθαρίσας) having purged them from the Guilt of Sin by his atoning Blood, (see *Heb.* i. 3. and ix. 14, 22, and x. 2.) which Effects of his Blood and Spirit are signified by the cleansing Quality of Water, (*Ezek.* xxxvi. 25.) and by legal Purifications *with the Ashes of a Heifer sprinkling the Unclean*, (Heb. ix. 13, compared with Numb. xix. 17, *&c.*) as also by the Water, with

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which they are washed at their Baptism *; and he, in the Greatness of his Love, communicates these Benefits by Means of the Gospel preached to them, and received and applied by Faith, for *cleansing them from all Sin by his Blood*, (1 John i. 7.) and *renewing them by the Holy Ghost*; (Tit. iii. 5.)

27 That he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such Thing; but that it should be holy and without Blemish.

27. That he might set every Member of the Church before his immediate Presence, and exhibit them to his View, and make them every Way agreeable, acceptable and delightful to him, through the Purifications and Ornaments, which he himself bestows upon them, as *a Bride prepared and adorned for her Husband*; (Rev. xxi. 2.) and so might *present* the whole Church, *before the Presence of his Glory, with exceeding Joy*, (Jude, *v.* 24.) all over beautiful and shining in illustrious Honour with himself, with whom they shall *appear in Glory*; (Col. iii. 4) as being not only washed from their Sins in his own Blood, and array'd with his infinitely amiable and perfect Righteousness; but also sanctified throughout by his Spirit, so as to have no Remainders of Pollution or Deformity, any more than of Guilt; no, not the least Spot to defile their Garments, nor the least Wrinkle to detract from their Beauty, nor any such Thing as might abate their Perfection, or tarnish their Lustre; but that, as the Sacrifices offered to God under the Law, and Wives espoused to their Husbands, were to be without Blemish; so they might be presented as perfect in Holiness, as in Happiness, and without the least Defect, *unblameable and unreproveable in his Sight*, (Col. i. 22.)

28 So ought Men to love their Wives as their own Bodies. He that loveth his Wife, loveth himself.

28. So, to apply this to the Argument in Hand, all Husbands, that pretend to any Hope of Interest in this peculiar, superlative and abiding Love of Christ, ought to be influenced by a Consideration of it to imitate him, as far as possible, in the Sincerity, Constancy and Ardour of their Affection to their Wives; even with such a Sort of kind and tender Love, as they would always maintain and cultivate for the Welfare, Ease and Comfort of their own natural Bodies; their Wives being relatively one Flesh with them, and as it were the restored Part of themselves; (*ver.* 31.) since the Woman was at first taken out of the Man: So that he who exercises Love in its most tender and en-

* Here, as some apprehend, is an Allusion to the *Mode* of Baptism by *Immersion*, as at other Times there are Allusions to the Mode of *sprinkling*, or *pouring Water*. (See the Note on *Rom.* vi. 4.) And yet I think it can't be inferred, that the Apostle here intended to refer to Baptism by *Immersion*; because the Word (λουτρον) signifies, as our Translators have rendered it, *washing* in general, whatsoever be the Way and Manner of it: (Vid. *Suid. Lexic.*) And Persons might be baptised with the Water of a *Laver*, as is commonly done with the Water of *a Bason*, which is one Sort of *Laver*, by *pouring* or *sprinkling*, without having their whole Bodies immersed in it. But others think that the Allusion is to *Jewish* Washings; and others, that it is to *nuptial* Washings of a Bride, when she was to be presented to her Husband.

gaging Form towards his Wife, does it all, in Effect, towards himself, and he will find the Advantage of it. It is in Reality Self-love; and surely nothing can be a stronger Inducement to it, than this.

29 *For no Man ever yet hated his own Flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church:*

29. For no Man, in his Senses, ever has been so inhuman, or so very destitute of a Principle of Self-love, as to neglect and abuse his own Body, out of Enmity to it, and to its Health, Comfort and Ease, as it is his own Flesh; but it is natural to him to feed and cloath it, for its Sustenance, Refreshment and Warmth, and to supply it with such Things, as are needful and convenient for it: And every Husband ought to do the like by his Wife, who is one Flesh with him; even as the Lord Jesus, in his infinite Love, has taken the best, the most affectionate and effectual Care of his Church, which he has espoused unto, and made one with himself.

30 *For we are Members of his Body, of his Flesh, and of his Bones.*

30. For we, who believe in him, are Members of that mystical Body, of which he is the Head; and in a spiritual Sense are as closely united with him, and as dear to him, and receive all Grace and Glory from him, by Virtue derived from his Body which was broken for us, as if, by our near Alliance to him in human Nature, we had been *Bone of his Bone, and Flesh of his Flesh*, as the Wife was originally of her Husband, according to what our first Father *Adam* said of *Eve*, who was made of one of his Ribs, (*Gen.* ii. 22, 23.)

31 *For this Cause shall a Man leave his Father and Mother, and shall be joined unto his Wife, and they two shall be one Flesh.*

31 And to shew how close the Union is between the Husband and his Wife, and what mutual Tenderness there ought to be between them, It is immediately added, as an Establishment of the Marriage-law in all future Generations; (*Gen.* ii. 24.) because of this original Oneness of Husband and Wife, when ever any Man hereafter shall enter into the matrimonial State, he shall be so weaned from his Father and Mother, as to place his warmer Affections upon his Wife, though without abating the Love which he owes, and is ever to continue paying to them; and shall be ready to leave his Parent's Family (if it be needful) to dwell with her, and cleave to her: And these two, the Man and Wife, shall be accounted of, and shall treat one another with as much Affection, as if they were in a *literal* Sense but one Body.

32 *This is a great Mystery: But I speak concerning Christ and the Church.*

32. What I have been saying about the Marriage of *Adam* and *Eve*, and the Union of Man and Wife, contains a mystical Sense, as it is emblematical, and carries a lively Resemblance of a still more excellent and happy Marriage, and of a more intimate Union, which surpasses our Comprehension: I mean that strict Union, which is wonderfully made between Christ and his Church, as he is their Husband, and they are his Spouse, and as he and they are closely united together, like one Body, of which they are Members, and he is the Head, that animates and influences,

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rules and governs, and takes the utmost Care of them: And as *Eve* was brought forth out of *Adam*'s Side while he was asleep; so the Church is produced in a spiritual Manner, by Virtue proceeding from the Side of a crucified Saviour, when he was pierced, and slept the Sleep of Death, that they might live with him for ever.

33 *Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular, so love his Wife even as himself; and the Wife see that she reverence* her *Husband.*

33. Neverthelefs, these Words of *Adam* concerning *Eve*, and concerning the Marriage-state, have also a literal Sense, suitable to the Design of the Argument I have been upon, relating to the respective Duties of Husbands and Wives: Therefore I conclude with observing that, according to the original Law of Matrimony, and the Illustration which has now been further given of Duties pertaining to it, from a Consideration of the Union, that subsists between Christ and the Church, 'Tis the bounden Duty of every Husband among you in particular, and without Exception, to love his Wife with the same sincere, kind and singular Affection, with which he loves himself, she being his second self; (*ver.* 28, 31.) And 'tis no less the Duty of every Wife among you, to pay all becoming Respect and Honour to her Husband, not with a slavish Fear, but with a conjugal Love and Reverence, and cautious Fear of offending him.

RECOLLECTIONS.

With what Chearfulness should the dear Children of God imitate their heavenly Father! And what an affecting and engaging Motive to *Brotherly Love* is the dying Love of Christ, who offered up himself as an atoning and acceptable Sacrifice for us! But how unworthy the Christian's Character, Privileges and Obligations is it, to give way to any Sin, especially such shameful ones, as Heathens and unconverted Sinners are infamous for! Neither Covetousness, which is constructive Idolatry; nor any Sort of Unchastity or Impurity; nor any Works of Darkness, should ever be found, or countenanced, by those that profess themselves to be Saints: For, whatever vain Deceivers may suggest to the contrary, such Things are abominable and injurious, and exclude the Practisers of them from the Blessings of God and the Saviour's Kingdom of Grace and Glory, and bring divine Wrath upon their Heads. What a visible Change in Conversation is to be expected from those, that are awaken'd into Life and Light by the powerful Voice of Christ! They should walk as Children of the Light, under the Influence of the Spirit, unto all Goodness, Righteousness and Truth; their Words and Actions should carry such Reproof to Workers of Iniquity, as shews that they have no Fellowship with them in their evil Deeds; but that they, upon Trial, approve of those Things, that are acceptable to their Lord and Saviour, and to God through him. How watchful and careful ought they to be in their Walk! They should be very circumspect to shun Temptation, Sin and Danger, and to redeem Time for the best Purposes, especially in evil Days; and should behave wisely in an upright Way, and not like ignorant and foolish People, who neither consider what they are doing, nor whither they are going. How pure and sublime are the Joys, that arise from being filled with the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit! There is no Danger of Excess in these, as there is in being drunk with Wine; they dispose us for singing the Praises of God with harmonious Voices, and the sweetest Melody in our Hearts; and make us thankful to Him, through Christ Jesus, in every Circumstance of Things. But how concern'd should we be to fill up all Relations of Life with the Duties of them, from a Principle of holy Reverence and Fear of God! Husbands and Wives should not make a Jest of, but conscientiously attend to the respective Duties, that result from their Union with each other as one Flesh. And O how happy would the Marriage-state be, if both Relatives, in their Places, would study to please one another! Conjugal Love would keep

keep all right between them, and secure the Duties on both Sides. How intimate and endearing is the Relation and Affection of Christ to his Church! He is full of tender Love and Care toward them, and freely gave himself for them, that he might take away the Guilt, Power and Defilement of their Sins by his Blood and Spirit, and by means of his Word; and might, at length, present them all to himself array'd in Glory, like a Spouse fit for such an Illustrious Husband to delight in, as having no Spot or Blemish of any Kind upon them. How constraining ought his Love to them be, to engage their most dutiful Submission to him! And what a sweet Influence should these Considerations have upon every religious Husband to love his Wife as himself, and upon every religious Wife to reverence her Husband!

CHAP. VI.

The Apostle proceeds to the relative Duties of Children and Parents, 1—4. Of Servants and Masters, 5—9. Directs all Sorts of Christians to put on their spiritual Armour in the Exercise of their Graces, and in the Use of those Means, which are necessary to defend and secure them against the Enemies of their Souls in this State of Warfare, 10—18. Desires their Prayers for himself, 19, 20. And concludes his Epistle with an Account of the Reasons of his sending Tychicus *to them, and with his Apostolic Benediction, 21—24.*

TEXT.

1 *CHildren, obey your Parents in the Lord: For this is right.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. TO proceed to some other *relative* Duties that are incumbent upon Christians; Let those of you that are Sons or Daughters, whatsoever your Age or Circumstances be in the World, remember your Obligations, and be careful to pay all filial Duty, to your Fathers and Mothers, (*ver.* 2) whether they be Believers or not, or whether they be circumcised or uncircumcised Christians: (See the Note on *Chap.* v. 21.) Hearken to their Counsels and Commands; and yield a submissive, chearful and ready Obedience to them in all lawful Things, for the sake of the Lord Jesus, who has made it your Duty to attend to their Instructions, (*Prov.* i. 8) for his Glory, and suitable to your Relation to him: For this Obedience to Parents is (δίκαιον) a just Debt, according to the Law of Nature and of all civilized Nations; and is highly fit and equitable in itself, considering how much ye have depended upon, and been beholden to their Care, Kindness and Cost; and that, under God, ye owe your very Beings to them. Still further to illustrate and enforce this Duty;

2 *Honour thy Father and Mother, (which is the first Commandment with Promise)*

2. Remember, that 'tis enjoin'd upon you in the fifth Commandment of the *moral* Law, (*Ex.* xx. 12) which is particularly confirm'd and enforced by our Lord, (*Mat.* xv. 4, &c.) and is of perpetual Obligation, as requiring that every one of you, who stands in the Relation of a Son or Daughter,

ter, should consider both your Parents §, as naturally your Superiors; should always think and speak honourably of them; should pay all submissive Reverence and Respect to them; and (if Need be) should do what you can, by Way of dutiful Affection and Requital, to afford an honourable Maintenance and Relief, not to your Father only, but to your Mother also, even in her State of Widowhood, (1 *Tim.* v. 4.) that she may not be treated with Contempt. (*Prov.* xxiii. 22.) This is a Matter of so great Importance, that the Commandment, relating to it, is set at the Head of the second Table of the Law; being the very first of all its Precepts, relating to that Sort of Duties: And, to give the greater Encouragement to a diligent Observation of it, it is the only Precept about second-table Duties, that is backed with the gracious Promise of a Blessing; and is indeed the only one, in the whole System of the moral Law, that has any particular Promise annexed peculiar to itself; *that* in the second Commandment being of a more general Nature, and relating to them that love God, and keep, not only *this*, but all his Commandments, (*Ex.* xx. 6.)

3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the Earth.

3. The Blessing particularly promised, and remarkably suited to impress young Minds, and to engage your obediential Reverence of your Father and Mother is, that by the Favour of God, which ordinarily adds the Blessings of Providence to dutiful Children, you may be happy and prosperous in your temporal Affairs, through all the Circumstances of this Life: And that your Days may be lengthned out, with Comfort upon Earth, to a good old Age *.

4 And ye, Fathers, provoke not your Children to Wrath: but bring them up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord.

4. And as to the Duties of *Christian-parents*, Let those those of you that are Fathers †, in which Mothers are also included, (*v.* 2.) look upon your Children as Parts of yourselves; and (μη παροργιζετε) be very careful that ye do not by humoursome or unreasonable Impositions and Restraints, or by rigorous and harsh Usage, in Words or Blows, irritate their Resentments, and exasperate their Passions, *lest they be discouraged*, (Col. iii. 21.) and be prejudiced against you, and against the Christian-Religion itself, as though it taught you to be morose, ill-natur'd and severe to them:

§ The *Mother* seems here, and in several other Places, to be particularly mentioned; because Children are more apt to slight and disrespect their *Mothers*, than their Fathers.

* Tho' this Promise had a primary Reference to a long-continued Enjoyment of all the Plenty of the Land of *Canaan*; yet it has a further Reach, and is ordinarily fulfilled in providential Favours to religiously dutiful Children, under the Gospel-dispensation: *For Godliness is profitable unto all Things, having the Promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come:* (1 Tim. iv. 8.) But *the Eye that mocketh at his Father, and despiseth to obey his Mother, the Ravens of the Valley shall pick it out, and the young Eagle shall eat it:* He shall be exposed to the Judgments of God, to bring him to an untimely and shameful End. (*Prov.* xxx. 17. See also *Mat.* xv. 4.)

† *Fathers* seem to be here specified, because they are commonly more stern and severe, than *Mothers*, though these are also included.

But treat them with all Kindness, Lenity and Tenderness, and with persuasive Arguments, to work upon their Judgments and Consciences, and engage their Affection and Duty toward you, and to make them in Love with the good Ways of the Lord: And give them a religious Education, by making them familiarly conversant with the holy Scriptures betimes, and adding catechetical Instructions to assist their Understandings from their Childhood up; (2 *Tim.* iii. 15.) as also by prudent Discipline and moderate Corrections, when necessary and seasonable; (*Prov.* xiii. 24.) and by your own regular Example, and daily Prayers with and for them. In this Manner, as a Nurse cherishes her Children, *nourish them up in the Words of Faith and good Doctrine*, (1 Tim. iv. 6.) according to the Commandment of the Lord, that, by his Grace, they may learn to fear him and reverence their Superiors, and may know the Way to eternal Life through Jesus Christ: Watch over and restrain the first Appearances of Pride and Passion, Vanity and Deceit, and all the early Buddings of corrupt Nature in them; warn them against youthful Sins and Errors, that would be destructive to their Comfort, Reputation and Usefulness in this World, and to their eternal Happiness in the next; exert your parental Authority, like faithful *Abraham*, (Gen. xviii. 19.) to regulate their outward Behaviour; and inure them to publick, family and secret Worship; do all that in you lies, in a humble Dependence upon the Lord for his Blessing, to cultivate their Minds, Morals and Religion, and to *train them up in the Way they should go*, in Hope that *when they are old, they will not depart from it*, (Prov. xxii. 6.)

5 *Servants, be obedient to them that are* your *Masters according to the Flesh, with Fear and Trembling, in Singleness of your Heart, as unto Christ*;

5. To add one Class more of *relative* Duties, Let those of you, that are in the Quality of Servants, make Conscience of obeying all lawful Commands of your earthly Masters, inclusive of Mistresses, who in Things pertaining to the Body and this present World, which will soon come to an End, are set over you by the Providence of God, and have a Right to the Services of your Stations, whether they be Believers or not; (1 *Tim.* vi. 1, 2. and *Tit.* ii. 9, 10.) Be willingly and faithfully subject to them, with a reverential and cautious Fear of offending them; and with a Dread of provoking their Wrath, and much more the Wrath of God against you, on Acconnt of your betraying your Trusts, embezzling their Goods, or disobeying their just Orders. And see that ye do all this with a sincere, ingenuous and honest Heart, without Deceit or Guile, as those that therein desire and intend to serve the Lord Christ, who has commanded civil, as well as religious Duties, and whose Name and Doctrine are honoured by your performing them in Obedience to him, and according to his Will.

6 *Not with Eye-service, as Men-pleas-*

6. Let all your Services to them be fulfilled with Diligence and Constancy, not merely while their Eyes, or the

ers, but as the Servants of Christ, doing the Will of God from the Heart;

Eyes of other People, are upon you to oberve how ye behave, as though ye only aimed at gaining their good Opinion, and at approving yourselves to Men, for secular Advantages: But let it be done with a special Reference to the Lord Christ, as those that are sensible of your being always under his Eye, and that ye must give an Account to him; and as those that are ambitious of pleasing, honouring and obeying him, by discharging your Duty to your Masters, with all good Fidelity, from a sincere Principle of Religion toward God, as it is agreeable to his Will, who requires it of you.

7 *With Good-will doing Service, as to the Lord, and not to Men:*

7. In this Manner, Apply to all the Business of your Stations freely, affectionately and industriously, with all Readiness of Mind, as Persons that love your Masters, and have their Interest at Heart; and that take Pleasure in doing them all the Service, to which God, and they call you: And engage in it from a Sense of Duty to Christ, your supreme Lord and Master, that ye may serve, please and glorify him, who is always observing your inmost Thoughts, as well as outward Actions; and not merely to acquit yourselves well in the Sight, and to gain the Esteem of Men.

8 *Knowing that whatsoever good Thing any Man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether* he be *bond or free.*

8. Let Servants be encouraged to be careful and faithful in performing all the Duties of their Places, as being well assured, from the Word of God, that whatsoever good Service any one does in the Manner but now mentioned; though his Master, after the Flesh, should reward him Evil for Good; yet, the Lord Jesus, the great Judge of all, will graciously, and in Faithfulness to his Promise, make him a rich Amends, according to his Work, in the great Day of Account, whether he be a Bond-slave, or a freer Sort of Servant; which likewise is equally true, as to every other faithful Person, whether he be, in any civil Respect, a Bondman, or a Freeman *.

9 *And ye, Masters, do the same Things unto them, forbearing threatning; knowing that your Master also is in Heaven; neither is there Re-*

9. And as the forementioned Duties are owing from Christian-servants to their Masters; so there are Duties no less incumbent upon believing *Masters* toward their Servants, whether they be Christians or not, and whether they be their Slaves or their hired Servants; Let those of you therefore, who are Masters, take care that ye perform the Duties of your Places and Relations, with the like Prin-

* As the Apostle is hitherto speaking only of the Duty *of Servants*, and don't enter upon that of *Masters*, till the next Verse, *Bond* or *free*, seems to relate to *Bond-slaves*, that were so by Birth, or Capture in War, or by Purchase; and to *hired Servants*, that were comparatively free, as they were at Liberty, till they had let themselves out by their own Consent; and as they might use their Freedom for continuing a longer or shorter Time, upon proper Warning in their Master's Service, or not; and so the Exhortation suits the Case of all Sorts of Servants in all Ages. But, if we consider this Passage as a Transition from the Duty of Servants to the Duty of Masters, then *bond* (as all the Expositors I have met with take it) refers to *Servants*, and *free* to *Masters*, or at least to Persons that were not Servants.

ciples

spect of Persons with him.

ciples and Views, in Singleness of Heart as to Christ, and according to the Will of God; and that ye behave toward them with Gentleness and Humanity, and not in a domineering Way, with stern and severe Menaces, Insolence and Cruelty, as if ye were a higher Species of Creatures, and they were to be ruled with Rigour, and only by Fear and Terror, and were to be treated more like Brutes than Men: But always remember that ye yourselves have also a superior Lord and Master over you, even Christ, whose Throne is in the Heavens, and whose Kingdom rules over all, who constantly takes Notice of every Part of your Conduct toward your Servants, as well as of theirs toward you; and will call you to as strict an Account for it, as he will them for theirs: For as Persons of all Ranks are alike little before him, and he is not moved in his Regards to them, by any secular Differences of superior or inferior Stations and Circumstances in this World; so he will impartially judge *Masters*, as well as *Servants*, in the great Day, and deal with them according to their respective Behaviour upon Earth.

10 *Finally, my Brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might.*

10. Now, to conclude with Exhortations that equally concern you all, my dear Christian-Brethren, whatsoever be your external Conditions and Relations in this Life; As ever ye would be enabled to fulfil the Duties of your several Places, and to resist and overcome all the Powers of Sin, Satan and the World, which would turn you aside from them, and oppose you in your Progress heaven-ward; Set out, and go on every Step of your Way, like valiant Soldiers under the Captain of Salvation, not in your own Strength, which is no better than Weakness; but in the Strength of Christ, through whom ye may do all Things: (*Phil.* iv. 13.) *Be strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus*, (2 Tim. ii. 1) and in his Almighty Aids and Influences, by daily Derivations from him to make you equal to every Duty and Service, Suffering and Conflict, to which at any Time ye are called.

11 *Put on the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the Wiles of the Devil.*

11. And that, setting out in this Strength, ye may be throughly equipp'd and furnish'd for all Encounters against your spiritual Enemies, of which Satan is their Head and Chief; Let it be your earnest Endeavour, like Soldiers sensible of the Power of their Enemies, and of their own Weakness and Dangers, to live in the daily and hourly Exercise of all those Graces, and in the Use of all those Means, which God has appointed and provided, gives and makes effectual, for Defence and Safety, like the most excellent Armour of Proof, which ye are to put on to guard and cover you from Head to Foot, * that by means thereof, in fight-

* As in the Description of the spiritual Armour, *ver.* 14—17, there is an Allusion to a *Girdle*, *Breast-plate*, *Shoes*, and a *Helmet*, that are put *upon the Body*, and to a *Sword* and *Shield*, that are held in the *Hand*, the Apostle here speaks of Believers *putting on*, (ἐνδύσασθε) and in *ver.* 13 of *taking to them* (ἀναλάβετε) *the whole Armour of God*; and so includes a proper Use of every Part of it.

ing the Lord's Battles, ye may be enabled to stand and maintain your Ground against, and defeat the numerous, ensnaring, circumventing, fallacious and cunning Method, (μεθοδειας) of Assault, from the Devil and all his Instruments. And ye have the greatest Need of all this Help:

12. *For we wrestle not against Flesh and Blood, but against Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of the Darkness of this World, against spiritual Wickedness in high* Places.

12. For in this holy Warfare all of us, who have listed under Christ's Banner, whether we be Ministers or private Christians, are called, like Persons singled out for that Purpose, to close and sharp Combat and Contention against, not only the carnal Reasonings and Interests of animal Nature, consisting of Flesh and Blood, and against wicked Men, and the ungodly Rulers and Magistrates of this World, (see the Note on Chap. i. 21) who dwell in mortal Flesh, and are attended with human Passions, like ourselves; but we have still more potent and formidable, as well as invisible Adversaries to deal with, that have the nearest Access to the inmost Powers of our Souls before we are aware; We are called to guard, and engage against all Ranks and Orders of malicious, sagacious, deceitful, powerful and diabolical Spirits, even against the mighty Princes and Governors, that have a superior Dominion over the fallen Angels and fallen Men, and have all the Legions of Hell at their Beck to practise upon human Nature, and execute their horrid and mischievous Designs; we are called to enter the Lists against these malignant Spirits, that, like a strong Man armed, (*Luke* xi. 21) have, by divine Permission, erected a Kingdom of Darkness, taken Possession of, and usurped an Empire over the Minds and Hearts of the blinded Sinners of this World, whose Thoughts and Ways are Works of Darkness; (*Chap.* ii. 2) and we are called to fight against those spiritual Enemies*, who are themselves most vilely and implacably wicked; who hover about in the Air very near us, and all around us, and make it their Business to propagate spiritual Wickedness, such as Unbelief, Pride, Idolatry and Error, relating to spiritual Things; and Malice, Wrath and Envy, which resemble their own wicked Temper, and are most immediately seated in Men's Souls; and who contend with us about the spiritual Things of Heaven and Glory, to prevent our obtaining the eternal Inheritance.

13 *Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil*

13. Since therefore ye have so many subtle and powerful Enemies, above your Match, to contend with, See that ye be armed *Cap-a-pee*, and that in the Strength of Christ ye continually handle your Arms, (see the Note on *ver.* 11) and make a proper Use of every spiritual Weapon, offensive

* *Spiritual Wickedness in high Places* (τα πνευματικα της πονηριας εν τοις επουρανιοις) might be most strictly and grammatically render'd *Spirituals of Wickedness in Heavenlies*, whether *in heavenly Places*, or *heavenly Things*; and relates not to earthly Magistrates, but to the *Fallen Angels*, as opposed to *Flesh and Blood*.

Day; and having done all, to ſtand.

and defenſive, which God has furniſh'd you with, that ye may be capable of reſiſting and overcoming all theſe formidable Adverſaries, in every Day of Trial and Danger from this evil World, and from the Evil One, and indeed in all the Days of your Lives, which are *few and evil*, (Gen. xlvii. 9) as alſo in the Day of Death, which of all others is the worſt to thoſe, who are not in good Caſe to meet it; and that when ye have gone through all the Fatigues of your Conflicts, acquitted yourſelves as good Soldiers of Jeſus Chriſt, and finiſhed your Warfare, ye may ſtand as triumphant Conquerors, through him that has loved you; and may ſtand before him with Boldneſs at his coming. (See the Note on *Luke* xxi. 36.)

14 *Stand therefore, having your Loins girt about with Truth, and having on the Breaſt-plate of Righteouſneſs;*

14. In order therefore to your obtaining a glorious Victory †, ***Stand faſt in the Lord***, (1 Theſſ. iii. 8) Stand to your Arms, and in your proper Stations, indefatigably and inceſſantly, with all Watchfulneſs and Diligence; (1 *Pet.* v. 8, 9) and keep your Standing with Stedfaſtneſs in the Field of Battle: And that ye may not be expoſed to your Enemies, but may effectually reſiſt and put them to flight, See that no Part of your ſpiritual Armour be wanting, or neglected. If ye would know what are its ſeveral Parts, which ye are to put on, and take to yourſelves, (*ver.* 11, 13) and how to uſe them for defeating the Temptations and Aſſaults of the Devil and his Agents, Obſerve the following Particulars: As Soldiers uſe to gird themſelves with a broad Belt to keep up their long Garments, (ſee the Note on *Luke* xii. 35) and buckle them and the ſeveral Parts of their Armour cloſe together, as alſo to fortify their Loins, that they may be the ſtronger and fitter for Agility, Labour and Fatigue in War; ſo encompaſs yourſelves as it were with Sincerity and Uprightneſs of Heart, and with Truth and Honeſty of Converſation, *that Righteouſneſs and Faithfulneſs may be the Girdle of your Loins*, (Iſ. xi. 5) to keep you ſteady, reſolute and active in every ſpiritual Encounter *. And as Soldiers have their *Breaſt-plate* to de-fend

† As in the *general View*, ſo in the *particular Deſcription*, of the Chriſtian's Armour, all the Terms are of a *military* Strain, in Alluſion to ſuch Pieces of Armour, and ſuch Weapons, as Soldiers were wont to put on, or make uſe of in War for their own Defence, and for annoying their Enemies: But (as ſome have obſerved) here is no Armour *for the Back*, which may intimate that we ſhould never turn our Backs to our ſpiritual Enemies, by a cowardly Flight, that would expoſe us to Danger; but ſhould always face them with holy Courage, and reſiſt them ſtedfaſtly in the Faith, that they may flee from us, inſtead of our fleeing from them: And tho' the Word *ſtand* is the ſame here and in the Cloſe of the laſt preceding Verſe; yet, I apprehend, 'tis to be conſider'd in a different Reſpect, as *that* relates to the Standing of a *Conqueror* after the Battle is over, and *this* to ſtanding and maintaining our Ground *in the Field of Battle*, during the Encounter.

* By *Truth* in the former, and *Righteouſneſs* in the latter Part of this Verſe, ſome underſtand the *Doctrine of the Goſpel*, and the *Righteouſneſs of Chriſt*: But theſe, I think, are rather to be referred to other Parts of the Spiritual Armour, which are mention'd in the following Verſes. The *Doctrine of the Goſpel*, or *the Word of Truth*, falls in with, either the *Goſpel of Peace*, or *the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God*, ver. 15, 17; and *Chriſt's Righteouſneſs*, which is ſo important and-

fend the Heart, and other Vitals of the Body against the mortal Wounds, which their Enemies generally aim at making in those Parts; so labour, by the Assistance of the Spirit, to live in the daily Exercise *of Righteousness and true Holiness*, (Chap. iv. 24) which proceed from Faith and Love, (1 *Thes.* v. 8) and are an Imitation of our Lord himself, who *put on Righteousness as a Breast-plate.* (Is. lix. 17.)

15 *And your Feet shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace.*

15. Farthermore, as Soldiers are wont to wear *Greaves of Brass*, (1 *Sam.* xvii. 6) or a Sort of strong Boots, to guard their Feet and Legs against Briers and Thorns, Traps and rugged Ways, sharp Spikes and Stones, that are laid by the Enemy to retard their Marches; so let the whole of your Walk and Warfare be disengaged from worldly Thoughts, Affections and Pursuits, that would hinder you in your Christian-Course; and be full of holy Resolutions, by divine Grace, to hold on your Way thro' all Hardships and Dangers, that ye may be fortified against the many Snares and Temptations that lie in wait for you; and may be ready and prepared for every Encounter, by a proper Use of the Doctrine of the Gospel, in frequent Meditations upon it, and in a firm Belief, and regular Profession, and Improvement of it, according to its Promises, Encouragements and Provisions; and according to its great Design of promoting all Manner of spiritual Prosperity, which is included in the Term *Peace*; as particularly, *Peace* with God and in your own Souls, aud with Fellow-Christians; yea, *as far as in you lies*, and lawfully may be, *with all Men*, (Rom. xii. 18) that none may hurt or discompose, reproach or embroil you.

16 *Above all, taking the Shield of Faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery Darts of the Wicked.*

16. But especially, as Soldiers have their *Shields*, which they can turn every Way for the Defence of one or another Part of the Body, and of their other Armour, that may be most exposed to Danger; and for warding off the sharp and poisonous Darts and Arrows of the Enemy, from what Quarter soever they are thrown †; so, as the surest Defence of your Souls from all the fierce Attacks of Satan, whether in a Way of Accusation for Sin, or of Excitation to it; and as a Sort of universal Covering to the whole Man, and to all the other Parts of your Christian-Armour; Let a lively

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necessary a Part of the Christian-Armour, that without a humble Dependence upon it by Faith, the Warfare can never be acceptably and successfully managed and accomplished, may more properly belong to *the Shield of Faith*, which the Apostle so emphatically speaks of, *ver.* 16, as sufficient to *quench all the fiery Darts of the Wicked*, (See *Gurnall*'s Christian Armour.) And therefore, to keep the several Parts of this Armour as distinct as possible, I take *Truth* and *Righteousness* here to signify *Sincerity*, and *Holiness in Heart and Life*, which are spoken of as Fruits of the Spirit, *Chap.* v. 9.

† As the venomous Serpents were called *fiery Serpents*, Numb. xxi. 6; so *fiery Darts* allude to those poisonous Darts, which barbarous Nations used in War, and which inflamed the Parts that were wounded with them, and flew swiftly and secretly, like Darts of a killing Nature, before Men were aware: And these *fiery Darts of the Devil* seem to be principally meant of his most horrid, violent and sudden Injections, that fill the Soul with the utmost Distress, and have the most dangerous Tendencies and Effects, when they are indulged and complied with.

Exercise of Faith on Christ, *your Shield*, (Pſ. lxxxiv. 9) on his Blood and Righteouſneſs for Pardon and Juſtification, and all needful Supplies of Strength and Succour, (ſee the Note on *ver.* 14) together with a humble and firm Dependence on the Power and Grace of God in him, as a Shield, (*Gen.* xv. 1, and *Pſ.* v. 12) and on the Promiſes of the new Covenant, with realizing Views of inviſible and eternal Things; Let this be your Shield; in the Uſe of which ye ſhall be effectually enabled to refute and ſilence every Charge of Guilt, which your grand Adverſary would faſten upon your Conſciences, in order to his terrifying and driving you into Deſpair; and by holding up his Shield of Faith, ye ſhall be able to repel, and take off the Force of all his Attempts to ſurprize and hurry you into hard and blaſphemous Thoughts of God, and Chriſt, and Religion, and into ſudden violent Emotions to Wrath and Revenge, or into fleſhly Luſts, which war againſt the Soul, or into any other Sin. Whatſoever his furious Temptations or ſudden Suggeſtions may be, that, like poiſonous Darts, penetrate and inflame the Soul with Horror, Anguiſh and Guilt, wherever they ſtrike; all of them will be as effectually diſarm'd of their Force by this Shield, as Fire is of its Strength when 'tis quench'd: This will make you a Match for all the Aſſaults of that malignant Evil One, the Devil, whoſe Nature and Deſign is nothing but Wickedneſs; and for all the Efforts of this preſent evil World againſt you: *For the Word of God abides* in ſtrong Believers, to enable them *to overcome the Wicked One*, and *this is the Victory that overcomes the World, even our Faith.* (1 John ii. 14, and v. 4.)

17 *And take the Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God:*

17. And as Warriors have their *Helmets* to ſecure their Heads; ſo let *the Hope* of eternal Life and *Salvation*, (1 Theſſ. v. 8) be as an Helmet to guard you againſt Fear and Danger, and every mortal Wound, to make you patiently endure all Hardſhips, and to fortify you againſt the moſt furious and threatning Attacks of Satan and all his Confederates: And as valiant Soldiers draw their *Swords* to defend themſelves, and cut down their Enemies; ſo hold up, in the Hand of Faith, the Promiſes, Threatnings and Commands, and every other Part of divine Revelation, which may be called *the Sword of the Spirit*, as 'tis a ſpiritual Weapon of Warfare, and as the Holy Spirit indited, and adapted it to all Exigencies, and enables Believers to conſider, underſtand and apply it, as Circumſtances require; and to make an effectual Improvement of it for their own Safety and Comfort, and for the Deſtruction and Confuſion of all their Soul's Enemies, who can no more withſtand it, when weilded and edged by Faith, than the Tempter could the Anſwers of the Captain of our Salvation, which he introduced with an, *It is written.* (Mat. iv. 4, 7, 10.)

18 *Praying always with all Prayer and*

18. And as the War ye are engaged in is of a *ſpiritual* Nature, and all your own Attempts to exerciſe any Grace,

or

Supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all Perseverance and Supplication for all Saints;

or make Use of any Means for resisting and overcoming the Enemies of your Souls, will be ineffectual, without the special Aids of the divine Spirit; Let every Conflict be attended with solemn, stated, or ejaculatory Prayer, in all Sorts of earnest Addresses to God; such as Adorations, Thanksgivings and Confessions, humble Petitions and Pleas in the Name of Christ, on all Occasions, in publick and private, by the Assistance of his Spirit, and with your whole Hearts, for all seasonable Help, to enable you to make a proper and spiritual Use of every Part of your Christian-armour to the best Advantage, for your own Preservation, and the vanquishing of Sin, Satan, and the World: And be assiduously careful to maintain a praying Frame of Spirit, and to watch for all convenient Seasons for Prayer; as also to watch against the Designs and Methods of your Adversaries, and for all Opportunities and Assistances to annoy and defeat them; and to watch for all Influences of the Spirit in Prayer, and fo rall Answers to Prayer; and see that ye be constant and unwearied herein, without fainting, though ye may not receive immediate Answers of Peace: And, like Persons of a publick Spirit, Be importunate in your repeated Addresses to the Throne of Grace, wrestling with God, by humble Faith, to avert all Evils from, and confer all desirable Blessings upon, not only yourselves, but all your Fellow-christians, the best of which needs your Prayers, that they, as well as you, may keep their Ground in this spiritual Warfare, and may be progressive in Light and Grace, Comfort and Holiness, to the Glory of God, and the Confusion of the Devil and all his Instruments.

19 And for me, that Utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my Mouth boldly, to make known the Mystery of the Gospel.

19. And since my present Trials are very great, and my Work, for which I, a poor frail sinful Creature, am utterly insufficient of myself, is of the highest Importance to the Interest of Christ and the Welfare of immortal Souls; and since, in my publick ministerial Character, I am attended with as many, or more Difficulties and Temptations, than private Christians are exposed to, I earnestly beg your solemn Prayers continually for me, your faithful and affectionate Apostle and Friend, that God would give me Enlargement from mypresent Bonds, and graciously inspire me with suitable Matter, and give me Courage and Freedom of Speech in his Work, that I may not be kept under Restraint, nor be afraid or ashamed to preach Christ before his and my Enemies; but may have Opportunity of doing it openly, and may speak with all Boldness, Plainness and Liberty of Spirit, and without Partiality or Reserve, in publishing the great Doctrines of the Gospel, which contain the unsearchable Riches of Christ; and in asserting the glorious Privileges of *Gentile*-believers, which, though now clearly revealed, appears to be a strange and mysterious Thing to the *Jews*.

20. For

20 For which I am an Ambassador in Bonds; that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

20. For the preaching of this blessed Gospel, I am sent by the Lord Jesus, as his Ambassador, to negotiate the great Affair of Peace between God and Sinners; and, for my Faithfulness and Zeal, in executing the Trust, which he has committed to me, I am, at this very Time, a Prisoner in Chains at *Rome*, (See the Note *Acts* xii. 6.) which I chearfully endure, and *faint not*, as *knowing whom I have believed*, (2 Tim. i. 12.) and that my Reward is with him: And I earnestly intreat the Continuance of your Prayers, that, under all this Difficulty and Confinement, I may still have Opportunity, and be animated to go on *preaching the Kingdom of God, and teaching those Things that concern the Lord Jesus, with all Confidence*, undauntedly, freely and plainly, according to the Duty of my Office, and the Sense I have of it, without Molestation from any one whomsoever, (*Acts* xxviii. 30, 31.)

21 But that ye also may know my Affairs, and how I do, Tychicus a beloved Brother and faithful Minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all Things:

21. But that ye may the better know how to direct your Prayers to God for me, I have not only given you a Hint of my present afflictive Situation, and how it fares with me, in this Letter, which I convey to you by the Hands of *Tychicus*, one of your *Asiatic* Friends, (*Acts* xx. 4.) who is a dear Brother in the Lord, beloved of him, and of myself and you, and is an upright, diligent and laborious Servant of Jesus Christ in the Work of the Ministry; but he also will give you a faithful Account at large, by Word of Mouth, of all Things that relate to my Sufferings and Comforts under them, to the Treatment I meet with from Enemies and Friends, and to my own Behaviour, and the Success of what I am now permitted to do for Christ, under all the Disadvantages and Restraints that attend me:

22 Whom I have sent unto you for the same Purpose, that ye might know our Affairs, and that he might comfort your Hearts.

22. Though it would have been a great Pleasure and Advantage to me, to have enjoyed more of the good Company of this beloved and faithful Brother; yet, such is my Love to you, that I have so far deny'd myself, as to send him for this very End and Purpose, that ye may be fully acquainted how Things go with me in my Confinement; and particularly, how the Lord stands by me, and enables me to bear my Trials with Patience, Resignation and holy Fortitude; and that, by telling you how God is with me, and owns me, as well as by his free Conversation, and preaching the Gospel to you, he may revive your Spirits, which are apt to be disheartned and cast down at my Afflictions; and may encourage you, from my Example, to trust in the Lord, and go on in his good Ways, amidst all the Opposition ye may meet with for Christ and the Gospel's Sake.

23 Peace be *to the Brethren, and Love with Faith from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

23. My Heart's Desire and Prayer is, that Peace with God, Peace in your own Minds, and Peace one with another, and all Manner of Prosperity in Soul and Body, may continue and abound among the holy Brethren and Members of the Church, which are with you, whether they be

be Ministers or private Christians; and that, under a Sense of God's Love to them, their Hearts may be filled with the most ardent growing Affection to him and one another, together with, and as the Result of, the most lively Exercise of that Faith which works by Love. May all this Happiness, and both these excellent cardinal Graces of the Spirit, which lead on to all the rest, flourish and increase in their Souls by special and continued Influence from God the Father, who, in the Oeconomy of Salvation, is the original Fountain of all the Blessings of the new Covenant; and from our dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is the great and only Mediator between God and Man, and, in that Quality, is the Purchaser and Dispenser of all the good Things we have, and hope for, relating to this World, and that which is to come!

24 *Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in Sincerity. Amen.*

24. May the free Love and Favour of Christ, and of God in him, and all its blessed Fruits and Effects, especially in all seasonable Discoveries, Communications and Assistances, to the producing of strong and lively Exercises of every Grace, be richly extended both to those at *Ephesus*, and to all in every Place, who desire, esteem and delight in our only and complete Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, (εν αφθαρσια) heartily and unfeignedly, according to the Truth of the Gospel, without corrupting the Doctrine of Salvation alone by him, which is the main Subject of this Epistle; and without Mixture of an inordinate Love to this present World, or of any corrupt Affection whatsoever, and *that* with Continuance, till it shall be perfected in a glorious Immortality! With sincere Desire and assured Hope of their being thus abundantly blessed by the God of all Grace, I say, *Amen.*

RECOLLECTIONS.

How clearly does Christian-religion state and enforce *relative* Duties! According to its Dictates, *Children* should honour and obey their Parents in all lawful Things, as ever they would approve themselves to the Lord, and have his Blessing upon them: *Parents* should study to allure, and not discourage their Children, nor irritate their angry Passions, by severe Usage; and should train them up in the good Ways of God: *Servants* should make Conscience of obeying the just Orders of their Masters, whether under their Eye, or not, with Sincerity, Chearfulness and Fidelity, from a Principle of Faith in Christ, and in Obedience to the Will of God, for Fear of offending him, and them, and in Hope of a gracious Reward at the Day of Judgment: And *Masters* should treat their Servants with Equity and good Temper, as knowing that they also have a greater Master in Heaven, and that there is no Respect of Persons with him.———How many are the Trials of all Christians, whatsoever their Stations be in this World! But how complete is the spiritual Armour, that God has furnished them with! They, in the Strength of the Lord, and in the Power of his Might, may withstand all the Stratagems and Assaults of Satan, and his Instruments, in every evil Day; and may stand their Ground, till they get through all their Troubles and Dangers, and stand complete Conquerors and Triumphers in Heaven. Of what excellent Advantage in this holy Warfare, are Sincerity and Uprightness, and an Exercise of Righteousness and true Holiness! And of what high Importance are Faith in Christ and his Righteousness, and a good Hope of eternal Salvation, together with a due Use of the holy Scriptures, and daily Prayer! These will be

unto

unto us instead of a military Belt, Breast-plate and Greaves, and of a Shield, Helmet and Sword, for defending us against, and repelling the fiery Darts of the Devil, and the most furious Attacks of all the Enemies of our Souls. How should these Thoughts animate us with holy Vigour and Bravery against all the Forces of Hell and Earth, in humble Confidence that, by the Use of these Means, we shall be enabled to withstand and overcome them!—— How extensive ought our Prayers to be for every good Thing, not only for ourselves, but for all Saints, and for all the Ministers of the Gospel, that are faithful and beloved; and especially for such as suffer Persecution for Christ's Sake, that their Opportunities, Courage and Faithfulness may not fail; but that they may go on to declare the incomprehensible Truths of the Gospel, with all Freedom, Boldness and Plainness, as they ought, without Restraint or Reserve! And how concerned should we be, that Peace, with Faith and Love, may abound to all the Saints, from God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that the free Favour of God, through him, may be extended, in all its rich Variety of Manifestations, Fruits and Effects, to every one who sincerely loves our Lord Jesus Christ! We should be ready to testify our earnest Desire and Hope of this, by saying, *Amen*, *so be it*, and *so it shall be*.

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF THE APOSTLE *PAUL's* EPISTLE to the *PHILIPPIANS.*

In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The Preface to the EPISTLE to the *PHILIPPIANS.*

PHILIPPI was a considerable City of *Macedonia*, and the first City of that Province, with regard to its Situation in the Way from *Thrace* to *Macedonia*. (See the Note on *Acts* xvi. 11, 12.) It was called *Philippi* from *Philip* of *Macedon*, the Father of *Alexander* the Great, who enlarged and fortified it, and gave it that Name. And it was famous for the Battles, that were afterward fought in its neighbouring Fields, between *Augustus* and *Mark Anthony* on one Side, and *Brutus* and *Cassius* on the other, in which the former were victorious.

The Apostle *Paul* was called by a Vision to preach the Gospel at this City; and God succeeded his Labours there to the Conversion of *Lydia* and the Jailor, *Acts* xvi; and in Process of Time many others, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, were brought over to the Faith of Christ, insomuch that a famous Church was erected, and completely furnished with proper Officers, relating to its spiritual and temporal Concerns. (*Chap.* i. 1.)

The Apostle visited them afterwards again, *Acts* xx. 1—6, who had a mighty Affection for him, and he for them; and, in their abundant Love to him, they distinguished themselves, above all other Churches, by sending seasonable and liberal Supplies for his Maintenance, when he was at *Thessalonica*; and now again, while he was a Prisoner at *Rome*; from whence, about the Year of our Lord, say some 60, say others 63, he sent this Epistle to them by the Hand of *Epaphroditus*, by whom he had received their generous Contributions, together with an Account of their tender Concern at the Troubles that had befallen him, and of their continuing stedfastly in the Doctrine of the Gospel, notwithstanding the Attempts of some *Judaizers* among them, to divide and seduce them: And the chief Design of his Epistle was to fortify them still further against these Seducers, and encou-

encourage them to abide in the Faith of Chriſt, notwithſtanding all Oppoſition.

Accordingly he begins his Epiſtle with hearty Thankſgivings to God for the eminent Grace beſtowed upon them, and for their affectionate Regards to himſelf; expreſſes his ardent Love to them, and great Satisfaction in them; and aſſures them, that his Bonds were over-ruled for the Furtherance of the Goſpel; that he was calm and comfortable under them, and was confident that in a little Time he ſhould be releaſed from them, as it proved in the Event; and ſo encourages them to be eaſy as to him, and to bear up with Chriſtian-Fortitude under the Sufferings, which they themſelves endured for the ſake of Chriſt and the Goſpel. *Chap.* i. He exhorts them to Love and Union, Public-ſpiritedneſs and Lowlineſs of Mind, which he recommends to them, by the matchleſs and ſurprizing Example of Chriſt's humbling himſelf; and hopes to ſend *Timothy*, and to come afterwards himſelf to help them ſtill further in their ſpiritual Affairs. *Chap.* ii. Encourages their holy Joy in Chriſt; cautions them againſt the Attempts of *Judaizers*, with whom he compares himſelf, and ſhews the happy Change that was made upon him by divine Grace, and the Principles and Views, with which he acted, in Oppoſition to theirs; and which he propoſes to the Imitation of the *Philippians*, Chap. iii. And cloſes the Epiſtle with Expreſſions of great Tenderneſs toward them, and toward ſome particular Perſons among them, with Exhortations to ſeveral religious and moral Duties, with repeated grateful Acknowledgments of their Favours to him, and with a Doxology, Salutations, and his uſual Benediction. *Chap.* iv.

CHAP. I.

The Apostle Paul *inscribes this Epistle to the Church and its Officers at* Philippi, *in the Salutation of whom* Timothy *joins with him,* ver. 1, 2. *Offers up Thanksgivings and Prayers to God for them, on account of the good Work of Grace, which he was satisfied would be perfected, as in the Judgment of Charity, and Fervor of his Love, he hoped this concerning them all,* 3—7. *He expresses his Affection to them, and pours out an excellent Prayer for them,* 8—12. *Fortifies them against Dejection at his Sufferings, which turn'd to good Account, in exciting others to preach Christ,* 13—20. *Tells them that he stood prepared for glorifying Christ by Life, or Death,* 21—26. *And exhorts them to all holy Conversation, Zeal and Constancy in the Profession of the Gospel, notwithstanding all the Opposition of their Adversaries,* 27—30.

TEXT.

1 P*AUL and Timotheus, the Servants of Jesus Christ, to all the Saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi with the Bishops and Deacons:*

2 *Grace* be *unto you, and Peace from God our Father, and* from *the Lord Jesus Christ.*

PARAPHRASE.

1, 2. P*AUL*, and *Timothy*, who concurs with him in Affection, and Approbation of what he writes, (see the Note on 1 *Cor.* i. 1) as being joint Servants of Jesus Christ, to minister his Gospel, and promote his Kingdom and Glory; We cordially unite in this Address to the Church of Christ, which ordinarily meets, as the Seat of all Ordinances at *Philippi*, and consists of visibly, and we trust of really, sanctified Persons, (*ver.* 7) through vital Union with, and Influence from Jesus Christ, the Head of the Body: And as ye are a compleatly organiz'd Church, furnish'd with proper Officers; with Pastors to inspect, preside and watch over your Souls, and your spiritual Concerns, and to feed you with Knowledge and Understanding*; and with Deacons to take care of your temporal Affairs, and especially of your Poor, (*Acts* vi. 1—6) according to the Order of the Gospel, we include these, together with the private Members, in what follows, as may be applicable to them respectively; and particularly do so in our most solemn Wishes, that the divine Favour, with all its distinguishing Effects, and every Kind of Prosperity, especially in what relates to your Souls, may abound toward you from God, our Covenant-God and Father, as the Spring and Fountain of all Grace, and from the anointed Lord and Saviour, as the Purchaser and Distributer of all its Blessings to you, as well as to us.

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* *Bishops* or *Overseers* (ἐπισκόποις) is of the same Import with, and promiscuously used for *Elders*, or *Pastors* of particular Churches, as appears from *Acts* xx. 17, 28, *Tit.* i. 5—9, and 1 *Pet.* v. 1, 2: And *Bishops* or *Elders*, and *Deacons*, as far as appears from Scripture and primitive Antiquity, were the only different Orders of Officers in the apostolical Churches, tho' in some of them, Occasions so requiring, as in this Church at *Philippi*, there were more than one Pastor in a Church. (See the Sermon at the Ordination of Mr. *Tho. Gibbons*, *Oct.* 27, 1743.)

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3 I thank my God upon every Remembrance of you.

3. My Soul is filled with Thanksgiving and Praise to God, whose I am, and whom I serve, and who put me into the Ministry, and made me instrumental to your Conversion. I can't but bless his holy Name, from the Bottom of my Heart, as often as I think of you, and of what God has done for, and by you.

4 (Always in every Prayer of mine for you all making Request with Joy)

5 For your Fellowship in the Gospel from the first Day till now;

4, 5. I find myself sweetly constrained to make Mention of you all, in every stated and solemn Address to God, through the great Mediator, presenting my earnest and fervent Supplications at the Throne of Grace, for every one of you, with abundance of Pleasure, together with the most chearful Thanksgivings (*v.* 3.) for your Admission, thro' Faith, unto all the rich and glorious Privileges, Promises, Hopes and Enjoyments of the Gospel-state; and for your Communion with God, the Father Son and Spirit, and one with another; as also for your readily communicating to the Support of the Gospel, and particularly to me in all my Sufferings for its Sake; and for your continuing, with Stedfastness and Perseverance, in all these excellent Things, from the Day of your Conversion, to this very Time, notwithstanding all the Opposition of your Enemies, and the Persecutions ye have endured. (*v.* 28, 29, 30.) And my Joy, on this Acount, greatly abounds;

6 Being confident of this very Thing, that he which hath begun a good Work in you, will perform it until the Day of Jesus Christ:

6. Being certainly assured, from the Testimony of God in his Word, from the immortal Nature of the Seed of Grace, from the Unchangeableness of his Love and his Covenant, and from the Merit of the dear Redeemer, and the Indwelling of his Spirit, that God, who, in the Riches of his free Favour, has begun to work the best of all Works in you *, even the Work of Faith, and of heart-changing Grace, whereby ye are brought into the Fellowship of the Gospel, (*v.* 5.) will, undoubtedly, in his Faithfulness carry on, maintain and increase it, by his almighty Power, all the Days of your Lives, till he shall perfect or finish it, at the great Day of Christ's coming to *be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe.* (2 Thes. i. 10.)

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* *A good Work* is referred by some to their *Liberality* to the Apostle; but *that* was a good Work *done by them*, rather than begun by the Operation of God *in them*; and it seems too mercenary and selfish, for one of the Apostle's generous and disinterested Spirit, to express such wonderful Joy and Thankfulness merely, or chiefly on that Account; and, in the foregoing Verse, he had spoke of their *Fellowship in the Gospel*, as the Matter of this Joy and Praise, with Reference to which, he speaks of his being confident, that he, who had begun this good Work, would perform, or finish it, ([illegible]) until the Day of Jesus Christ. I therefore take it to signify the *good Work of Faith*, or *of Grace* in the whole Compass of it, which God had wrought in them: And, as such a comprehensive Interpretation gives us the best Idea of the Apostle's Joy and Praise on their Behalf; so it makes his Sentiments more useful and applicable to the Church in all Ages, than to confine it to the particular Circumstance of Liberality in the *Philippians* towards him. The extremely limited Sense, that some Expositors affect to give of this, and many other Passages of the New Testament, apparently narrows the Rule of Faith and Practice and the Comfort of the Scriptures in their Reference to us, as if they were not of such standing and extensive Use, as I am persuaded the Spirit of God designed them to be.

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I am fully ſatisfied of this important Point, with Regard to every one, that hath received the Grace of God in Truth.

7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, becauſe I have you in my Heart, inaſmuch as both in my Bonds, and in the Defence and Confirmation of the Goſpel, ye all are Partakers of my Grace.

7. And, as ye have already made ſuch a credible and honourable Profeſſion of Chriſt, and ſo ſtedfaſtly abode in it, and given ſuch evident Proofs of your Sincerity therein hitherto, I am bound in the Judgment of Charity, and it is highly reaſonable, and becoming me, to ſuppoſe, that this good Work is really begun in the whole Church: And, I am the rather inclined to entertain this charitable Hope concerning you all; becauſe, as Love thinks no Evil, but *hopes all Things*, (1 Cor. xiii. 5, 7.) ye are exceeding dear to me, and lie much upon my Heart, in my Addreſſes to God on your Behalf; foraſmuch as ye manifeſtly appear to be Partakers of the ſame ſaving Grace with my-ſelf, and have diſcovered it in your patiently enduring Tribulations, as I myſelf do, and in your Chriſtian-ſympathy with me, and concurrent Aſſiſtances, both in the Impriſonment I now ſuffer for the Cauſe of Chriſt, and in all my Labours for the Defence of the Goſpel, againſt the Cavils of its Adverſaries, and for the Confirmation of it, by Word and Deed, to the Confutation of them, and Eſtabliſhment of the Saints.

8 For God is my Record, how greatly I long after you all in the Bowels of Jeſus Chriſt.

8. For I can appeal to God, who knows my Heart, that I am exceedingly deſirous of the ſpiritual and eternal Welfare of every one of you; and that I even long, if it be his Will, to ſee you all again, that I may be inſtrumental, in his Hand, of ſtill further helping forward his good Work in you: And he is Witneſs that my ardent Deſire for, and after you, is not merely from human Gratitude, on Account of your Benevolence to me, or from any carnal or worldly Conſiderations whatſoever; but that it is chiefly of a ſpiritual Nature, for the Sake of Chriſt; becauſe I look upon you as his Members, dear to him; and am moved with the inmoſt Bowels of melting Affection toward you, under a Senſe, and in Imitation of his tendereſt Love and Pity, wherein he laid down his Life, that ye might be ſaved.

9 And this I pray, that your Love may abound yet more and more in Knowledge, and in *all Judgment;*

9. And, in the Fervor of my Affection for you, I earneſtly beg of God, that your Love to him, and his Son, to me and his People, Word and Ways, which dwells in you, and already works, and has eminently ſhown itſelf in you, as it ought in every Church-member, may ſtill more, abound and increaſe with, and under the Government of, growing Knowledge and Experience, as being led into the Doctrine of Chriſt, and ſettled, after the beſt Manner, in your Judgment and ſpiritual Senſe, (εν πασῃ αισθησει) as to the Whole of its Syſtem;

10 That ye may approve Things that are excellent; that ye may be ſincere, and without Offence till the Day of Chriſt;

10. That ye may carefully examine, try and prove, (εις το δοκιμαζειν) and thereupon diſcern and approve the Things that differ in themſelves, by Way of Preference to all others; and that differ in my preaching from what is delivered by falſe Teachers, and, upon Trial, prove themſelves

ſelves to be truly valuable and important; that ſo ye may be found to be genuine Chriſtians, pure in Heart and Life, free from all Hypocriſy and Deceit in your holy Profeſſion, and uncorrupted in your Principles and Deſigns, Temper and Behaviour, when judged of in the Light of the Word of God, and try'd by that infallible Standard of Truth and Holineſs †; and may have a Conſcience void of Offence toward God and Man, and be preſerved from every Thing, that might wound your own Spirits, or be an Occaſion of ſtumbling, or falling, to yourſelves or others; and *that* not only at certain Times, now and then, but with Conſtancy and Perſeverance all your Lives long, as thoſe that expect an awful Day of Account, and till Chriſt ſhall come to judge the World, that ye may be approved of him, as ſincere and eminent Believers then;

11. *Being filled with the Fruits of Righteouſneſs, which are by Jeſus Chriſt unto the Glory and Praiſe of God.*

11. Being all along, and found at that Day to be, *Trees of Righteouſneſs, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified*; (Iſai. lxi. 3.) even ſuch as, like Trees richly laden, greatly abound in the moſt precious Fruits of Holineſs and Obedience of every Kind, in their Seaſon, (*Pſ.* i. 3.) which are right and equitable in themſelves, and due from you, according to the juſt and holy Requirements of the moral Law, that unchangeable Rule of all Righteouſneſs; and which are produced by Virtue derived from Chriſt, (*John* xv. 5) and are acceptable to God, and turn to his Honour and Glory, in and through this great Mediator, (1 *Pet.* ii. 5. and iv. 11.) which is the ſupreme End to be aimed at in them all.

12 *But I would ye ſhould underſtand, Brethren, that the Things* which happened *unto me, have fallen out rather unto the Furtherance of the Goſpel*;

12. But, that ye may not be terrified or diſcouraged at my Sufferings for the Sake of Chriſt, I would fain have you know and conſider, my dearly beloved Brethren, that the Bonds and Afflictions, which have befallen me at *Rome*, according to divine Appointment, have been permitted and over-ruled, by the wiſe and holy Providence of God, contrary to all outward Appearances, and natural Expectations, rather to the Confirmation and Propagation, than to the Diſadvantage and Hindrance of the Goſpel.

13 *So that my Bonds in Chriſt are manifeſt in all the Palace, and in all other* Places;

13. Inſomuch that the Hardſhips and Impriſonments, which I am inabled to bear with a becoming Patience and Fortitude of Mind, through the gracious Preſence of Chriſt with me, are well known among all *Nero*'s Courtiers, and all the Citizens and other People in and round about *Rome*, to be, not for any Crime, that I have been guilty of; but merely for the Sake of Chriſt, which is Matter of Glory,

† *Sincere* (εἰλικρινεῖς) is a Metaphor, taken either from Things that are clariſy'd by the Heat, or examined and judged of by the Light of the Sun-beams; and ſo are found, upon the ſtricteſt Trial, to be pure and incorrupt: And *without Offence*, (ἀπρόσκοποι) is a Metaphor, taken from Perſons, that go on their Way inoffenſively, and without Obſtruction or ſtumbling.

rather than Shame, and hath proved the happy Occasion of many People's inquiring after him, and believing in him; among which are some of *Cæsar's* Houshold, (*Phil.* iv. 22.)

14 *And many of the Brethren in the Lord waxing confident by my Bonds, are much more bold to speak the Word without Fear.*

14. And, through the Influence of divine Grace, many Brethren in the Faith of Christ, and in the Work of the Ministry, being fully satisfied of the Justice and Excellence of my Cause, and of the Power of the Lord Jesus, which has visibly supported and comforted me under all my Troubles, and given Success to his Word, have thereupon taken Courage, and been more abundantly animated, and emboldened to preach the Gospel with a greater Freedom and Liberty of Spirit, than they ever were before, without being terrified by the Fear of any Sufferings, that might come upon them for it.

15 *Some indeed preach Christ even of Envy and Strife; and some also of Good-will.*

15. There are some indeed of the *Judaizing* Christians, that preach up Jesus, as the true Messiah, and several important Doctrines of Salvation by him, even from a Spirit of Envy at my Reputation and Success, in carrying the Gospel to the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, and insisting on Justification through Faith in Christ alone, without the Works of the Law *; and they do this with a Spirit of Contention and Opposition to me, that they may sink my Credit and Authority, and advance their own in the Church; but there are others, that preach the pure Doctrines of Christ, in their full Extent, with all Freedom and Delight, even from an hearty Affection to him and his Gospel, to immortal Souls, and to me his Apostle.

16 *The one preach Christ of Contention, not sincerely, supposing to add Affliction to my Bonds:*

16. The first of this Sort of Preachers, that set forth Christ in their Ministrations, by Way of Envy and Strife, do it, not (ἁγνως) from a sincere Desire of propagating the Truth as it is in Jesus, and of glorifying him; nor from an hearty Concern to imbrace him themselves, and recommend him to others; but rather from a vain Imagination that they shall thereby supplant, distress and grieve me, and so increase the Weight of my present Afflictions; and that they shall be a Means of pro-

* It is generally, and with great Probability supposed, that they, who *preached Christ of Envy and Strife*, were *Jewish* Converts, that set themselves against the Apostle *Paul*, and, on all Occasions, did what they could to hinder his Success, run him down, and promote his Troubles of every Kind: But I can't think that, on this Occasion, they preached a quite different Gospel from the Apostle's, according to their own corrupt *Judaizing* Notions: For he, who so constantly, and zealously declaimed against this, as *another Gospel*, for which, he that brought it was to be deemed accursed, (*Gal.* i. 8, 9.) would scarce have called it *preaching Christ*, as he does in this, and some following Verses; much less would have *rejoiced in it*, as he says he did and would, Verse 18. I therefore rather apprehend that they hypocritically preached the true Gospel of Christ, farther than they honestly could upon their own Principles, concealing their Sentiments about some of its Articles, that they might draw off the Affections of the Apostle's Friends from him to themselves, and might sow Strife and Divisions among them, and thereby exasperate the Government against him and his Adherents. This is what he calls Preaching Christ *insincerely and in Pretence*, in Opposition to others, who preached him in *Love*, and in *Truth* or *Uprightness*. But some think that they fully preached the true Gospel, though with Insincerity and base Views.

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moting the Continuance of my Bonds, and, perhaps, of making them issue in my Martyrdom, through the Umbrage that the Government may take at these contentious Ways of preaching the Word, and at the Divisions, which they may foment, by that Means, among the Professors of Christ.

17 *But the other of Love, knowing that I am set for the Defence of the Gospel.*

17. But the other Sort of Preachers, that are acted by a true Spirit of Love to Christ and Souls, and to his Cause and me in preaching him, do it as, not merely imagining *, but as being *well satisfied*, on the surest Grounds, that I am appointed, and set in the Church, by a divine Commission, for maintaining, vindicating and defending the true Gospel of Christ; and that I now lie in Bonds in Order to my making an Apology for it, whenever I shall be brought upon my Trial.

18 *What then? notwithstanding every Way, whether in Pretence, or in Truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.*

18. But, if contrary Views induce these two Parties to take Occasion to preach Christ, What is this to me? Shall I return Envy for Envy, or be vexed on this Account, as some of them suppose I would? No, though I pity them that are influenced to it, by unworthy Motives, and heartily detest their Insincerity; yet, which Way soever the Thing itself be done, whether with Dissimulation, under a sham Pretext of Zeal for Christ, and the Gospel, and the Welfare of Souls; or with Sincerity and Uprightness, to promote his Interest and Glory, and their Good, *the Fact* is, that Christ is made known by these Means at *Rome*, and round about it: And, as this is in itself Matter of great Joy, I heartily do; yea, and, by the Grace of God, will rejoice in it, whatsoever any of them may think to the contrary; and how much soever they may design thereby to strike at my Character, or even at my Liberty and Life itself.

19 *For I know that this shall turn to my Salvation through your Prayer, and the Supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.*

19. For I am persuaded in an humble Dependence upon the Promises of God, yea, am fully assured, by the Revelation of the Spirit, that even the worst Designs of my Adversaries, in their preaching the Gospel to distress me, shall be over-ruled by the good Providence of God, contrary to their Hopes, for my Enlargement and Deliverance from my Bonds, that I may be at Liberty to preach the Gospel without Restraint; (*v.* 25. †) and that all their ma-

* The Apostle speaks of his Enemies, *ver.* 16. as only (οιομενοι) *supposing*, (in which they were deceived) that they should add Affliction to his Bonds; but, in Opposition thereunto, he here speaks of faithful Ministers, as *knowing*, (ειδοτες) or being assured on the strongest Evidence, that he was *set for the Defence of the Gospel*; which may take in, both his being *appointed to* it in the Discharge of his Office, and his *lying* in Bonds, in Order to his making a publick *Apology* (απολογιαν) for it, in Answer to his Accusers: For the Word (κειμαι) here rendered *set*, as it also is in *Luke* ii. 3, 4., signifies likewise to be *laid*, and is so translated, *Mat.* iii. 10. aad *Luke* xxiii. 53.

† *Spiritual* and *Eternal*, as well as *Temporal Salvation*, are taken into the Paraphrase; because the *Supply of the Spirit of Christ*, through which the Apostle was satisfied, the Design of his Enemies would turn to his Salvation, seems, most plainly, to refer to this Sort of Salvation, which he knew he, by that Means, should be Partaker of, though his Enemies would have prevented it, by forcing him

malicious Attempts against me shall be sanctified to my own Soul's Benefit, as well as the Good of others, and made subservient, instead of being obstructive, to my eternal Salvation; as, by means of them, I shall be help'd forward to it, and fitted for it with the brighter Glory, (2 *Cor.* 1 . 17) through the Prayers, which ye are daily putting up, and I desire may still be continued for me; and through the rich Communications of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, whereby, in answer to your Prayers, I am enabled to make a good Improvement of all these Dispensations, to his Glory, the Advantage of others, and the Comfort of my own Soul.

20 *According to my earnest Expectation, and* my *Hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but* that *with all Boldness, as always,* so *now also Christ shall be magnified in my Body, whether* it be *by Life or by Death.*

20. This I am throughly satisfied will be the happy Event, according to what I firmly expect, and vehemently desire; namely, that, whatsoever my Adversaries may design, or do against me; yet I shall never be suffer'd, in any Circumstance of Things, to be ashamed of Christ and his Gospel, nor of my Hope in him; but shall be enabled to go on in his Work with all Liberty of Spirit and undaunted Courage; (παρρησια) and that as I always, through Grace, have hitherto in this Way glorified the Name of my great Lord and Master, ever since he converted me and called me to the Apostleship; so both now, and from this Time forward, Christ shall be glorified, and the Power of his Grace toward me shall be eminently exalted, in this my frail mortal Body, whether it be by a patient Continuance under Sufferings, and a further Publication and Defence of the Gospel, and by a holy Life and Conversation during my Abode in it; or by my suffering Martyrdom, and bravely owning and honouring him in the most cruel and violent Death, that can be inflicted upon me for his sake.

21 *For to me to live* is *Christ, and to die* is *Gain.*

21. For Christ is my Gain in living and dying, as he is my All, and lives in me; and as his Interest and Glory are the delightful End I pursue in both, that I may bring Honour to his Name, and gain over Souls to him by preaching the Gospel while I live, and by sealing my Testimony to him with my Blood, when I come to die*; which will also be

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him, if possible, thro' their evil Practices against him, to give up and renounce the Gospel: For *the Supply of the Spirit* relates, not so much to *Temporal*, as to *Spiritual* and *Eternal* Salvation, over and above all temporal Deliverances, which were to be expected rather, as the Effect of the Operations of *Providence* for him, than from a *Supply of the Spirit of Christ* to him; and in his Enlargement upon this Subject, in some following Verses, he speaks of his *Gain in Death*, and of the rich Advantage of *his being with Christ*, as the Object of his earnest *Desire aud Hope*, v. 21, 23.

* I have consider'd these Words (εμοι το ζην Χριςος και το αποθανειν κερδος) according to the different Renderings, that have been given of them, either as they stand in our Translation, or as signifying *Christ is my Gain in living and dying*; or *to me living and dying Christ is Gain:* But they seem to include Gain to the Apostle himself, as well as to the Honour of Christ, at *Death*; because in the next Verse, which may be consider'd as an Explication and Enlargement of his Thought in this, he intimates, that were he to live in the Flesh, his honouring Christ would be the Fruit of his Labour; but were he to die, this would still be far better for himself; and therefore he was in a Straight what to choose.

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to my own unspeakable Gain in the complete Salvation, which I hope for through him. (*ver.* 19,)

22 But if I live in the Flesh, this is the Fruit of my Labour: Yet what I shall choose I wot not.

22. But if it should please God to lengthen out my Days in mortal Flesh, to preach, and suffer for the Gospel, the great Fruit of my laborious and painful Services, even all that I think worth living for, is to promote the Honour and Interest of Christ, which in the End will also turn to my own Account; and therefore, were it to be left to my Determination, I am at a Loss to know whether, upon the whole, I should choose Life or Death.

23 For I am in a Strait betwixt two, having a Desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

23. For I am greatly straitned and press'd, in my own Thoughts, between two things, that engage my serious Concern; having, on one Hand, an earnest Desire to be loosed from the Incumbrance, Weakness and Imperfections, natural and moral, of this corruptible frail Body, and to be released by a Departure of my immortal Soul from it, that I may be with Christ, in his immediate Presence, to behold his Glory, which I shall do, as soon as ever my Soul is absent from the Body †; (2 *Cor.* v. 6) and which, far exceeding all Thought or Expression, is incomparably better for myself, than any Condition in the present Life can possibly be.

24 Nevertheless, to abide in the Flesh, is more needful for you.

24. But (δε) there is another thing that, on the contrary, my Heart is so much set upon, as to make me desirous, if it so please God, of continuing some Time longer in this present mortal Body, to exercise the Ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus; and that is; because, as I verily believe, (*ver.* 25) this is most for your spiritual Benefit, considering the Enemies, Temptations and Dangers that surround you, and the Help ye need against them; and therefore I am willing to live for public Service, even in this troublesome World, how much soever it may be my own personal Loss, to be kept all that while out of Heaven.

25 And having this Confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your Furtherance and Joy of Faith;

25. And being in great Hopes, that this noble End of my living in the Body would be answer'd, by the Blessing of God on my Labours, I am persuaded in my own Mind, by Intimations of the Spirit, that my Life shall still be preserved for a while, notwithstanding the threatning Aspect of my present suffering Circumstances; and that I shall have an Opportunity of seeing and ministring to, and of continuing and conversing for some Time with you, as well as with other Churches of the Saints, for promoting your spi-

† If the Soul were to sleep, or be in a State of Insensibility at Death, till the general Resurrection of the Body, the Apostle could have hoped for no more Advantage by dying *soon*, than if he were to have lived many Years longer; and consequently could have been in no Straight, between a Desire of living here for the Service of Christ, or of dying, to enjoy the Happiness of being with him in his Glory; nor could he have imagin'd, in this View of Things, that it would have been exceedingly far better (πολλῳ μαλλον κρεισσον) for himself to die out of Hand, than to live longer on Earth. (See the Note on 2 *Cor.* v. 1.)

ritual Edification in Light and Grace, Comfort and Holiness; and particularly for the further helping of your Faith, through the attending Power of the Holy Ghost, that ye may be *filled with all Joy and Peace in Believing*; (Rom. xv. 13.)

26 That your Rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me, by my coming to you again.

26. That so your delightful glorying (καυχημα) in Jesus Christ, the only Saviour, may be much greater, on account of my being restored to you, than ever it has been hitherto, or than probably it ever would be, were I never to be set at Liberty, and come to you again; and may be abundantly increasing yet more and more, thro' the Confirmation, which your Faith will receive by my wonderful Deliverance from Imprisonment, and by means of the Benefit, which ye may have, through my Ministrations, when I return to you.

27 Only let your Conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ: That whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your Affairs, that ye stand fast in one Spirit, with one Mind, striving together for the Faith of the Gospel;

27. In the mean while, there is one thing, that I would earnestly recommend to you, and insist upon, as necessary to evidence the Truth of your Faith, and to promote the Peace of your own Souls, and my Comfort in you; which is, that (πολιτευεσθε) your Traffick and Behaviour in the World, and one towards another, be answerable to your holy Citizenship, and such as is worthy your Christian-state and Character, and suitable to the Directions, and ornamental to the Principles, Privileges and Obligations, and to your holy Profession of the Gospel, which has Christ for its glorious Author and chief Subject; so that whether, when I may have Opportunity of coming to see you again; or whether, while by Providence I am detain'd from you, I may hear from yourselves, or others, a comfortable Account of the true State of Things among you, as to your spiritual Concerns; and particularly that, notwithstanding all the subtle and furious Attempts of your Adversaries, ye persevere and abide firm and unshaken, under the Influence of the Holy-Ghost, in one and the same evangelical Spirit of Liberty, Truth and Love; and unite, as with one Heart and Soul, and concur in vigorous Efforts, like Wrestlers, against all Opposition, (συναθλουντες) according to your respective Stations and Abilities, for preserving, propagating and defending the pure, uncorrupted and important Doctrines of Faith, as deliver'd in the Gospel, which ye have received of me; and for promoting the Grace of Faith in one another, that it may be in lively Exercise, and stedfastly professed, to the Glory of Christ, and the Good of your own and others Souls.

28 And in nothing terrified by your Adversaries; which is to them an evident Token of Perdition, but to you of Salvation, and that of God.

28. And I should rejoice greatly to hear that, how artful, or cruel and outrageous soever the Enemies may be, who set themselves against your Faith, and the Prosperity and Salvation of your Souls, ye behave with Christian-Fortitude, and are by no means affrighted, or discouraged at their Opposition to you and the Gospel, which carries indeed a sad Presage to them, as a plain Mark of their being in the Way to, and in the nearest Danger of eternal Destruction;

tion; and 'tis a righteous Thing with God to render Tribulation to them,* while they look upon you, as a People obstinately bent upon your own Ruin: But unto you, that are persecuted for the sake of Christ, and bear it with Faith and Patience, 'tis in reality an evident Token of eternal Salvation, and *that* not of yourselves, but of God, as his free Gift, who calls you to the Trial, and is able, faithful and willing to stand by you in it, and carry you through it, and crown you with everlasting Life at the End of it. (See *Mat.* v. 10, 11, 12.)

29 *For unto you it is given in the Behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.*

29. For 'tis a distinguishing Honour, which God graciously puts upon you, on Account of the Merit of Christ; and, though Flesh and Sense judge otherwise, it really is, and ought to be esteemed Matter of great Joy, (*James* i. 2.) that ye should not only be enabled to trust in him, and continue so to do, to the saving of your Souls; but that ye should also be help'd, patiently to endure Persecutions for him, from a Principle of Faith, and Love to him, and for his Glory here, that ye may be glorified with him in a more illustrious Manner hereafter. (See *Rom.* viii. 17.)

30 *Having the same Conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to* be *in me.*

30. And still further to reconcile you to, and keep you from fainting under, those Sufferings for Christ, which do, or may befal you in this World, ye would do well to consider, that they are only the same Sort of Combat, (αγωνα) which ye have formerly seen me violently exercised with, and yet enabled, through Grace, to sustain with holy Fortitude and Patience, for the same glorious Cause, among yourselves at *Philippi*; (Acts xvi. 19—24) and which ye now hear I am sorely conflicting with, under my present Bonds and Imprisonment, at *Rome*

RECOLLECTIONS.

How well are those Churches furnished with all needful Officers, that have faithful Pastors and Deacons, to take care of their spiritual and temporal Concerns! And with what cordial and devout Affection should we wish and pray, that all the Blessings of Grace and Peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, may be multiplied to them and their Officers! They are charitably supposed to be Saints in Christ; and it's Matter of great Thankfulness to God, that they are admitted to, and continue in the Fellowship of the Gospel, and bear the evident Traces of that good Work of Grace, which we may be confident its great Author will carry on, till it be perfected at the coming of Jesus Christ. And O how desirable is it, that Sincerity, Light and Love, and an inoffensive Deportment, and high Approbation of spiritual Things, together with the Fruits of Righteousness, which are, by Jesus Christ, to the Praise and Glory of God, should unitedly increase and abound in us! The preaching of Christ is his appointed Means of promoting these important Ends, as well as of the Conversion of Sinners; and he will own it as his Ordinance, tho' some may be influenced by un-

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* *Which is an evident Token of Perdition,* is supposed by some to mean, that the *Jewish* Opposers accounted the believing *Gentiles* to be obstinate and incorrigible, and abandon'd of God to everlasting Perdition. I have glanced at this Sense, tho' I take the other to be less strain'd, and full as well, or better suited to the Apostle's Design, in fortifying the *Philippians* against being terrified by their Adversaries.

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worthy, hypocritical, envious and contentious Views, to engage in that sacred Office. But how amiable is it, when 'tis discharged with Fidelity, and with sincere Affection to Christ, to his Servants, People and Cause! However, if Christ be really preached according to the Truth of the Gospel, whether from good or bad Motives, we ought to rejoice in the Thing itself; and it discovers a most excellent Spirit, when we are enabled so to do, even while we apprehend it is design'd to lessen our own personal Credit, Comfort and Usefulness: But, whatever others may intend, God will over-rule the Sufferings of his faithful Servants, for the Defence and Furtherance of the Gospel; for encouraging some to appear openly in the Cause of Christ; and for emboldening their own Faith and Hope, and helping forward their own Salvation, thro' the Prayers of his People, and the Supply of his Spirit. And what a happy Straight is it for them, not to know, whether they shall choose Life, through their earnest Concern to glorify Christ in their Services and Sufferings, for the Edification of the Church; or shall choose Death, thro' their vehement Desire to go immediately to Christ, which they assuredly know is best of all for themselves! What an Honour is it to suffer with a right Spirit for the sake of Christ! And how should Believers esteem this, as well as Faith itself, to be rather a Gift of Grace, on account of his Merit, than to be thought of with Terror! Only it behoves them to take care that, by the Grace of God, their Conversation be holy, as becomes the Gospel of Christ; and that they stand fast with one Mind and Heart, striving together, with fervent Zeal, for the Faith once deliver'd to the Saints, whatsoever the Consequence may be, as to this World. And O how near do they, and their spiritual Affairs, lie to the Hearts of their good Ministers! They are continually mindful of them in their Prayers; they heartily bless God for them, as Partakers of Grace with themselves; they rejoice in their Prosperity; and their tenderest affectionate Desire (as they can appeal to God) is toward them, that they may enjoy their Company and Communion, and may be helpful to them for their Support under Troubles, and for their Furtherance and Joy of Faith.

CHAP. II.

The Apostle exhorts the Philippians *to a harmonious, kind and humble Spirit and Behaviour, by various moving Arguments, and particularly by the Example of Christ,* 1—11. *To Diligence in the Affairs of their Salvation, in Consideration of God's working in them,* 12, 13. *To be exemplary and instructive to the World, and a Comfort to himself,* 14—18. *And he assures them of his Desire, Hope and Purpose of making them a Visit; and, in the mean while, of sending to them* Timothy *and* Epaphroditus, *both of which he recommends to their kind and honourable Regards,* 19—30.

TEXT.

1 IF there be *therefore any Consolation in Christ, if any Comfort of Love, if any Fellowship of the Spirit, if any Bowels and Mercies,*

PARAPHRASE.

1. AS I have expressed my Willingness to abide in the Flesh for your Furtherance and Joy of Faith (*Chap.* xi. 25.) I would therefore, earnestly press upon you the important Things, before recommended, (*Chap.* i. 27.) by several moving Considerations, as follow, If there be any Authority in my Exhortation, (παρακλησις) as delivered to you in the Name of Christ; or any Argument to be drawn from the Excellency of that Consolation, which ye have in him, and derive from him; or if ye would comfort me under my present Tribulations for Christ: If any Obligation arises from a joyous Sense of his Love, and of the Love of God in him to you; or from the Pleasure of your own Love

Love to him, and of your mutual Christian-Love one to another; or if ye would have in yourselves, and give me the Comfort of my Love to you, and of yours to me: If there be any Inducement from a Consideration of that holy Communion, that ye have, together with myself, in the special Influences, Gifts, Graces and Communications of the holy Spirit, which also gives you a *Fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ*; (1 John i. 3.) or from a Consideration of your spiritual Fellowship one with another, as Members of the same Body, of which Christ is the Head: If there be any Force in a Reflection on the most tender and affectionate Dispositions, which are in the Heart of God, and have discovered themselves, through Christ, with the kindest Compassion toward you, or which he has wrought, by his Spirit, in you towards one another, and me, his Prisoner in Bonds. If, I say, there be any Reality, Worth, Pleasure, Obligation, or Endearment in these Things, as there certainly is; and if, as I trust, ye yourselves have experienced them in your own Souls;

2 *Fulfil ye my Joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same Love,* being *of one Accord, of one Mind.*

2. Let these excite and engage you to fill up the Measure of that Satisfaction and Joy, which ye have already begun to give me; the Joy I mean is, that ye be intirely united with me, and with one another, in Mind and Heart, and *that* particularly in the following Things; That ye, as Christians, be knit together in sincere Love and Affection to Christ, and me his Servant, as I am to you, and in brotherly Love one to another; that ye unanimously agree to join with me, in pursuing one and the same Design, for promoting the Interest of Christ, the Purity of the Gospel, and your mutual Edification; and that ye be all of the same Judgment, and of * the same Relish, with myself, as to the great Doctrines of the Christian-Faith, in Opposition to all *Judaizing* Errors.

3 Let *nothing* be done *through Strife, or Vain-glory, but in Lowliness of Mind let each esteem other better than themselves.*

3. Take heed that nothing be said or done among you, from a litigious or ostentatious Temper, which delights in Opposition to others, and Applause to itself; but let every Thing be managed in your Church-Assemblies, and in all your Conversation and Behaviour, with such an humble Frame of Spirit, as shall dispose all and every one of you to entertain a modest and mean Opinion of their own At-

* *Be like minded,* (το αυτο φρονητε) and *be of one Mind,* (το εν φρονουντες) express just the same Idea, if we take them separately, and apart by themselves: But, as it can't be thought that the Apostle was guilty of such a needless Tautology, as taking them in the same Sense and Latitude imports, I apprehend the easiest Way of freeing him from it, is to consider *like-minded* as a *general* Term, and the three following Expressions as explanatory of the Particulars he included in it, namely, as *having the same Love, being of one Accord,* and *of one Mind*; and, it seems to me, that by the last of these, he intended an Agreement in *Sentiments,* as to the Doctrines of the Gospel; because he is here inforcing what he had said, *Chap.* i. 27. about their *standing fast in one Spirit, in one Mind, striving together for the Faith of the Gospel.* This preserves a proper Distinction in the Sense of all these Words.

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tainments †, and to be ready to condescend to Persons of the lowest Degree; as also to think and speak better of others, that walk becoming their Profession, than of themselves, as observing, and being duly affected with a Sense of their own Failings, and casting a Mantle of Love upon the Defects of other Christians, whose Hearts, for aught they know, may be better, and more approved of God, than their own.

4 Look not every Man on his own Things, but every Man also on the Things of others.

4. In order to your attaining this excellent Disposition, Let every one of you take heed of a narrow selfish Spirit, of magnifying his own Endowments, or of aiming at (μη σκοπειτε) his own Honour, Ease and secular Interests, as though this were the chief Mark and Scope of his Endeavours and Conduct; but let every one, as acted by a generous public Spirit, think himself bound in Duty, not, like a busy Body, to meddle with other People's Matters, but, in his own proper Sphere, to consult and pursue those Things, that make for their Edification and Peace, Comfort and Advantage, both in temporal and spiritual Affairs.

5 Let this Mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

5. For (γαρ) in Opposition to Strife, Vain-glory and Self-seeking, the same Spirit of Meekness, Humility and Love ought to prevail in you, which was so eminently conspicuous, and so perfectly exemplified in our Lord Jesus Christ himself.

6 Who being in the Form of God, thought it not Robbery to be equal with God;

6. Who, being possessed of the divine Nature *, and of all its essential Perfections, as the Son of God, and as the *Brightness of the Father's Glory and express Image of his Person*; (Heb. i. 3.) and so really, and in the strictest Sense, God, in the true and proper Form of Deity, did not count it an Usurpation, Injury or Wrong, or any Act of Rapine in him, to claim an Equality of Nature with God the Father; he and the Father being *essentially One*, though *personally distinct*. (John x. 30.)

7 But made himself of no Reputation, and

7. Nevertheless (αλλα) he was pleased, by a wonderful Act of Condescension, so far to disrobe, and, as it were,

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† Though Christians of eminent Gifts and Graces may, and can't but account their Attainments to be superior to others of the lowest Class, as the Apostle speaks of his own Gifts and Labours; yet, like him, they ought to be humble in ascribing nothing to themselves, but all to the Grace of God, 1 Cor. xv. 9, 10. and 2 Cor. xii. 11. And, with Respect to true Religion, Charity should teach them to hope, that there may be something more excellent, and less offensive to God in the Hearts of other Believers, than they find in their own, who, on one Account or another, are apt to think their own worse than others; because, the more they know themselves, the more they see the Treachery and Vileness of their own, than it is possible for them to see of the Hearts of others, whose Conversation is such, as becomes the Gospel of Christ.

* *The Form of God* is opposed to the *Form of a Servant* in the next Verse; and, as the *Form of a Servant*, which Christ is there said to have taken upon him, is meant of his being really a *Servant* in his assumed human Nature, with Reference to which, it is added, that he was *made in the Likeness of Men*, the plain Meaning of which is, that he was *really Man*; so *the Form of God*, which he was originally in, must, in all Reason mean, that he was, in his prior Nature, as *truly and properly God*, as he was in his human Nature *Man* and a *Servant*; and therefore it might well be said, that *he thought it not Robbery to be equal with God*, (as I think this Passage is justly rendered. (See this Sense of it vindicated in my Sermons on *Jesus Christ God-Man*, Page 21.)

took upon him the Form of a Servant, and was made in the Likeness of Men:

empty himself, of the bright Appearances of his divine Majesty and Glory, as not to make a pompous Shew of them; but, in great Measure, to conceal them from the Observation of Men, while, in themselves, they continued to be really and essentially the same as ever, and *all the Fulness of the Godhead dwelt substantially in him:* (Col. ii. 9.) And he voluntarily assumed human Nature into personal Union with himself, in so low and mean a Condition, as therein to become his Father's Servant, living and acting, bleeding and dying, according to his Commandment, (*John* x. 18.) and as even to act the Part of a Servant towards his Disciples, (*Luke* xii. 37.) and go through the most painful, humbling and difficult Services for their Redemption and Salvation; and he was so truly and properly Man, as to be *made like unto his Brethren*, of human Nature, *in all Things, Sin only excepted*, (Heb. ii. 17. and iv. 15.)

8 *And being found in Fashion as a Man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross.*

8. And when he was found in the common Form and Condition of Man, as tho' he had been nothing more, he submitted himself to the lowest Degree of Service and Sufferings; and went into a Course of the most humble Obedience, as to his Parents and Magistrates, in all lawful Things, so to his heavenly Father, as his Servant, to answer all the Demands of his holy Law, both in fulfilling its Precepts, and suffering its Curse; and this Obedience he paid even unto Death, and all along, till he came to die, yea, and in his dying, (*John* x. 18.) not an ordinary Death, but the ignominious, painful, and accursed Death of the Cross, to show that he stood in the Place of Transgressors, who were under the Curse of the Law, and that he came to redeem them from it, by bearing it for them, (*Gal.* iii. 13.)

9 *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name which is above every Name:*

9. And, having fulfilled his Work of Redemption in this humble, obediential and suffering Manner, God his Father, as a Reward of all this, according to its Deserts, and his Covenant-agreement, (*Isai.* liii. 9—11.) has gloriously exalted him, not by advancing him to a State of greater essential Happiness, Perfection, or Glory, than he had before, as God, which admits of no Addition; but by raising him, as Man, from the Dead, receiving him up to Glory, and setting him at his own Right-hand, and giving him universal Dominion, as Mediator; and so he illustriously manifested this divine Person to be as great and glorious, as he always was in himself: And, to recommend him by the most endearing Motives to our Acknowledgment of him as such, he has granted him, in his Office-capacity, as his incarnate Son, a new Title of Authority and Honour, incomparably superior to any other Name, Dignity or Authority whatsoever among Angels or Men; yea, too great for any mere Creature to wear, or be worthy of, even the Name of *the Saviour*, and the constituted *Lord* of all. (*ver.* 10, 11.) And he has done this,

10 *That at the Name of Jesus every Knee shou'd bow, of* Things *in Heaven, and* Things *in Earth, and* Things *under the Earth*;

10. To the End that, (uu) in Token of the religious Honours, which are due to the exalted Saviour, every one should bow the Knee, not at barely pronouncing the Word *Jesus*, nor merely in a literal Sense, in which the Angels in Heaven, that are to bow before him, have no Knees; but in paying such solemn Homage, Adoration and Worship to this glorious and divine Person, whose Name is *Jesus*; and in being so intirely subject to him, (See the Note on *Rom.* xiv. 11.) as is signified by bowing the Knee, as well as by other Expressions of it; and is to be paid to him by all Ranks of intelligent Creatures, whether they be Saints or Angels in Heaven, or such Men, as are living upon Earth, or as are dead and buried under the Earth, when they shall rise again, and appear at his Tribunal; Then they, and all the Wicked on Earth, and all the Devils in Hell, shall either willingly, or by Constraint, bow to him, as the great Judge of all.

11 *And that every Tongue shou'd confess, that Jesus Christ* is *Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.*

11. And he is thus highly exalted, that the Tongue of every one, of all Nations and Languages, should either chearfully own, and celebrate the Praises of his universal Dominion; or be forced to acknowledge, whether they wou'd or not, that he, the anointed Saviour, is in his Office-capacity, and exalted State, the great Head, Lord and Ruler over all, and the universal Judge at the last Day, to the Glory of God the Father, whose Honour it is to have always had such a divine Son, as is worthy of so high a Commission; (*John* v. 23. and 1 *John* ii. 23.) and who, in infinite Wisdom, hath appointed his incarnate Person to all this Dignity, for the Glory of his own Name, (*John* xvii. 1, 2.)

12 *Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my Presence only, but now much more in my Absence; work out your own Salvation with Fear and Trembling.*

12. Since therefore the Duties of Humility, Love and Kindness (*v.* 2—4.) are recommended, in so lively and affecting a Manner, by the matchless Example of our Lord himself; Let this animate you, my dear Brethren, to a noble Imitation of him therein; and since, from the Time of your Conversion, ye have, all along, shown an obediential Submission to his Commands, and to his Authority in me, not only out of Regard to my Presence, while I was personally among you to observe, assist, admonish and encourage you; but now, more especially to prove the Sincecerity of your Love, while ye are surrounded with Seducers, and are not under my immediate Inspection and Instruction, through my Absence from you; I, in Reflection upon this, intreat you, with the greater Confidence in your Obedience, to be vigorously active, under divine Influence, in promoting the Salvation of one another, (See the Note on *Eph.* iv. 32.) and to go forward, and abound in a diligent Exercise and Practice of the forementioned, and all other Graces and Duties that are necessary, in the Nature of Things, and by the Appointment of God, for the final Accomplishment of that Salvation, which is already your own, by the Gift of the

the Father, the Purchase of the Son, and the Application and Earnest of the Spirit: And I beseech you to labour in this Manner about your own Salvation, every one personally for himself, not with a servile, distrustful and desponding Fear, but with a holy, filial and awful Reverence of the divine Majesty, and a cautious Fear of sinning against, and thereby offending and dishonouring him; (*Psal.* ii. 11. and 1 *Pet.* i. 17.) and with humble Dread of doing any Thing to provoke his Frowns and Displeasure, the Hidings of his Face, the Withdrawings of his Assistance, and the Chastisements of his Rod, in Opposition to Self-confidence and carnal Security, with Regard to an Affair of such infinite Importance.

13 *For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of* his *good Pleasure.*

13. For, to encourage your utmost Diligence herein, on one Hand, and to guard you against Pride and carnal Security, on the other, Remember that the gracious and holy God, who has begun his good Work in your Souls, (*ὁ ἐνεργῶν*) continues to carry it on; with internal Virtue and powerful Energy, till it be perfected, (*Chap.* i. 6.) as it is he, that excites, inclines and determines your Will, in a Way consistent with the truest Liberty of a rational Creature, and enables you to perform the Things that relate to your Salvation; and does this, not for any Desert in yourselves to move him to it, but merely of his own free and sovereign Grace, which he exerts, with the greatest Pleasure and Delight, (*Mat.* xi. 26. and *Micah* vii. 18.) * and by which he works in you both to choose, and do every Thing that is good, in the Use of proper Means, with Freedom and Chearfulness.

14 *Do all Things without Murmurings, and Disputings;*

14. In Dependence therefore upon, and Compliance with his gracious Operations in you, Take special heed, that, according to what has been suggested, (*v.* 3.) ye, in the Whole of your Conduct, avoid all Discontent at the Prosperity of others, or at the Disposals of Providence toward yourselves; and all Animosities and wrangling Disputations one against another; and Disputings against the Things, which God enjoins upon you, or which ye may be called to suffer for Christ's Sake.

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* The Word *His*, not being in the *Greek*, some suppose that *good Pleasure* relates, not to the Manner, with which *God works in us*, but with which *Believers do*, as well as *will*, under his Workings, and so may signify that the *Effect* of his working in us is *our* willing, and doing with Freedom and Delight, as serving the Lord with *Good-will*, under the Influence of his Spirit and Grace, according to the Apostle's Use of this Word, (*Chap.* i. 15.) And this may be a very good Sense of the Phrase, while we consider God, as working all this in us, and exciting and influencing us to it by his Spirit. But, I rather think, that *good Pleasure* refers to the Way and Manner of *God's working in us*, than to the Way and Manner of *our willing and acting* towards him, in Things that relate to our Salvation: For, *our doing with good Pleasure*, is much the same with *our willing to do it*; and this Word, ([illegible]) as far as I find, is never used to express *our actings* about *our own* Salvation; but is frequently used with a Reference to *God*, and his Way and Manner of acting about it, and is commonly rendered *his good Pleasure*, or *good Will*, or *that which seems good to him*, as in *Mat.* xi. 25, 26. *Luke* ii. 14. and xii 32. *Ephes.* i. 5, 9. and 2 *Thes.* i. 11.

15. That

15 *That ye may be blameless and harmless, the Sons of God, without Rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Nation, among whom ye shine as Lights in the World.*

15. That ye may be in Reality, and appear to yourselves and others to be, unreprovable and inoffensive in your Temper and Conversation, and sincere in your Dealings with both God and Man, as becomes the Children of your heavenly Father, to distinguish you from the Children of the Devil; that there may be no just Occasion of Complaint or Accusation against you, for any Irregularity in your Walk, nor any Room for the most captious Adversary to revile and censure you, while ye live in the Midst of a Generation of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that are exceedingly corrupt and depraved in their Minds and Manners, like Persons bent and warp'd from the strait Rule of Righteousness, perverse in Heart, and turn'd aside from the right Ways of the Lord; among whom ye, as Christians, and a Church of Christ, are set up, ought to be, and in great measure are, as shining Lights, and illustrious Examples, for the Direction, Conviction and Imitation of the Men of this World, that they, *seeing your good Works, may glorify your Father, which is in Heaven:* (Mat. v. 16.)

16 *Holding forth the Word of Life; that I may rejoice in the Day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.*

16. Ye herein holding fast (ἐπέχοντες) with Perseverance; and holding up to all around you, with Evidence and Recommendation, Christ himself, who is our Life; (see *Col.* iii. 4, and 1 *John* i. 1) and the glorious Doctrine of eternal Life, in all its Purity and Excellence, as it reveals and shews the Way of obtaining it through him, and is the Power of God to the Salvation of every one that believes: (*Rom.* i. 16.) This I am greatly concerned for, that, according to my Hope, I may rejoice and glory in your Stedfastness and Usefulness here, and in your complete Salvation hereafter, when we shall appear together in the Presence of Christ, at his coming to judge the World in the great Day of Account; (1 *Thess.* ii. 19, 20) as finding then, that all my Strivings, Pains and Labours for, and with you, in the Course of my Ministry, have not been fruitless and ineffectual; but, by the Grace of God, have answered their desired End, to his Glory and your everlasting Happiness.

17 *Yea, and if I be offered upon the Sacrifice and Service of your Faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.*

17. Yea, and such is my Love to you, that I not only hope, and rejoice in the Hope of this happy Fruit of my Labours among you; but if (ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ σπένδομαι) in pursuit of them, the Providence of God should so order it, that I, his Prisoner, must not only undergo great Sufferings, but even lay down my Life to seal my Testimony with my Blood, and to be poured out, like the Oil and Wine on the Meat and Drink-Offerings, (*Exod.* xxix. 40, and *Lev.* ii. 1) to complete the Sacrifices under the Law, in ministring before the Lord: (λειτουργία) If this should befal me, for the further Confirmation of your Faith as believing *Gentiles*, who are offered up as an acceptable Sacrifice to God, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost, (*Rom.* xv. 16) I am so far from being troubled at it, that now, in the Foresight of it, I do, and then shall rejoice in it; and (συγχαίρω) I congra-

tulate

tulate you all, upon finishing my Work and Days in a Manner so honourable to Christ, and so richly to your Advantage.

18 *For the same Cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.*

18. And, in return, I beg of you, that on the same Account, in case ye should hear of my Martyrdom, ye would rejoice and congratulate me, (συγχαίρετέ μοι) on the Honour of my dying in such a Way, as shall bear the most noble Testimony to the Lord Jesus, and to his Gospel, and shall be to the farther Encouragement and Establishment of your Faith in him.

19 *But I trust in the Lord Jesus, to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good Comfort, when I know your State.*

19. But, notwithstanding all that I have said about my Willingness to die for these great Purposes, I am apprehensive that the Time for it is not yet come; and I humbly hope and trust in the providential Care and gracious Kindness of the Lord Jesus, who is highly exalted, and has a Name above every Name, (*v.* 9) and has the Government of the Church and the World upon his Shoulders, (*Is.* ix. 6) that my Circumstances will soon be in such a Situation, as to admit of my sparing the beloved *Timothy*, and sending him, according to my present Purpose, to see how Matters go with you, and help you in your spiritual Concerns, that I may have the greatest Satisfaction and Pleasure, according to my Hopes, when I shall hear from him, that the Work of the Lord prospers among you, and that the *Judaizing* Teachers have not been able, by all their Subtilties and Terrors, to pervert, or shake you.

20 *For I have no Man like-minded, who will naturally care for your State.*

20. The Reason of my designing to send him is, because I have no Christian-Brother with me, (ἰσόψυχον) that is equal in Excellency of Temper with him, or that is like-affected toward you; and that, with regard to Doctrine, Ministrations and Behaviour, walks in the same Spirit, and in the same Steps with myself, as he does; who sincerely, and with the most genuine Affection, (γνησίως) like that which a Parent naturally has for his Children, will lay your Concerns to Heart, and carefully study to promote your Establishment, Edification and Increase with all the Increases of God.

21 *For all seek their own, not the Things which are Jesus Christ's.*

21. For the Generality of the other Brethren *, that remain with me, are too selfish and pusillanimous, and rather solicitous about their own temporal Ease, Honour and Safety, than willing to expose themselves to such Fatigues, Dangers and Reproaches, as I met with at *Philippi*, (*Acts*

* *All* here can't mean *absolutely* and *universally*, *Every One* of the Christian-Ministers and Brethren, as if none of them had any Concern for the Interest and Glory of Christ: For the Apostle speaks honourably of *Epaphroditus*, (ver. 25) and tells us *Chap.* i. 14, that *many of the Brethren, waxing confident by his Bonds, were much more bold to speak the Word without Fear*; but, perhaps, *the best* of them were gone to other Places, and the greatest Part of them, that remained with the Apostle, were, compared with *Timothy*, more influenced by worldly Conveniencies and Advantages, than by a zealous Concern to promote the Interest of Christ, particularly at *Philippi*, where it might cost them more abundant Trouble, than at some other Places, in which they might hope to be useful.

xvi.

xvi. 19—24) and as they might possibly be called to suffer more, in promoting the Interest, Cause and Glory of our great Lord and Saviour, and the Welfare of his Church there, than in some other Places.

22 *But ye know the Proof of him, that as a Son with the Father, he hath served with me in the Gospel.*

22. But ye have had good Trial and Proof, (δοκιμὴν) and an experimental Knowledge of *Timothy*'s eminent Qualifications, Faithfulness, Courage and Zeal: Ye have seen how, when we were together among you, (*Acts* xvi. 1—13) he engaged, in the Face of all Hazard and Opposition, with me, as a Fellow-labourer in preaching and propagating the Gospel; and I assure you he always, like me, has been seeking, not his own Profit, but the Profit of many, that they might be saved: (1 *Cor.* x. 33.) He has been willing to go wherever I should send him, and to lay himself out in the Service of Christ, according to my Directions, with all the Affection and Chearfulness, Respect and Duty of a Son to his Father; he being indeed my own Son in the Faith, (1 *Tim.* i. 2) and of the same Spirit with me.

23 *Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me.*

23. I have therefore fixed upon this excellent and approved young Man, and hope I shall be able to send him to you in a very little Time, without further Delay, after I shall have taken my Trial at *Cæsar*'s Bar, (*Acts* xxviii. 19) which I daily expect to be called to; and then the Fact will prove whether I am to be discharged, or not.

24 *But I trust in the Lord, that I also myself shall come shortly.*

24. But though the Trial is not yet over, I have an humble Confidence in the Lord Jesus, whose I am, and whom I serve, and for whose sake I am now in Bonds; that by his over-ruling Providence, and gracious Appearance for me, I shall be acquitted from the malicious Accusations of mine Enemies, and set at Liberty; and that thereupon I myself may likewise have an Opportunity, e'er long, of paying you a Visit, according to my earnest Desire of seeing you, and rejoicing with yon.

25 *Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my Brother and Companion in Labour, and Fellow-soldier, but your Messenger, and he that ministereth to my Wants.*

25. Nevertheless, as I can't come immediately myself, and *Timothy* can't yet be spared, I in the mean while thought it proper, and needful for your Edification and Comfort, and for giving you a present Pledge of my affectionate Concern for you, to send back, with this Letter, the beloved *Epaphroditus*, who is my dear Brother in the Faith, and in the ministerial Office, and my Fellow-labourer in the Work of the Lord; yea, and my Associate, that endures Hardships, and exposes himself to Dangers with me, as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ, the Captain of Salvation, in our spiritual Warfare, under him, against Sin and Satan, and against Seducers, and all the Powers of this World, that set themselves in Opposition to him and his Cause; and (δὲ) he is your faithful Minister, and kind Messenger to me, who has fully answer'd the Trust which ye reposed in him, and has supplied me with such corporal Refreshments,

by

by your generous Benefactions, and given me such other Assistances, as were necessary and convenient for me *.

26 *For he longed after you all, and was full of Heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick.*

26. I chose especially to send him, because he was exceeding desirous of visiting you all again; and, like a truly sympathizing Friend, was extremely afflicted in his own Mind, even to the Sinking of his Spirits, not so much on account of his own late Sickness here, as of your having heard of it, which he, judging of your Affection to him, by the Experience he has had of it, and by his own to you, concluded would be an Occasion of much Grief and sore Distress to you.

27 *For indeed he was sick nigh unto Death: But God had Mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have Sorrow upon Sorrow.*

27. For, as ye heard, he really was seized with a Distemper in its own Nature mortal, and has been so dangerously ill, as to be brought to Death's Door: But God, whose Prerogative 'tis to kill and save alive, has in his good Providence wonderfully appear'd for his Recovery, in answer to Prayer, even beyond our Expectation; which was a great Mercy, not only to himself †, in his Relief and Restoration to Health and Ease, and Capacities of Service; but was also an Instance of God's tender Compassion, as to you and many others, so particularly to myself, lest, by losing so dear and important a Friend and Brother, I should have been over-loaded with this Addition of Sorrow, to that of his Sickness, and to all the other Troubles, I labour under in my Confinement.

28 *I sent him therefore the more carefully, that when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful.*

28. I therefore the more studiously and diligently (σπουδαιοτέρως) dispatched him with all Speed to you, though with much Self-denial in parting with him, that when ye receive him in a good State of Health again, ye may rejoice at the Sight, and I may have the Satisfaction of contributing to your Comfort therein, and of hearing of his Arrival safe and sound to you, who spared him so long to minister to me; and so may be the less troubled at my own Loss of his Company and Assistance, and at my other Afflictions.

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* It is supposed, with great Probability, that *Epaphroditus* was Pastor of the Church at *Philippi*: However, it is evident from the Character the Apostle here gives him, that he was a Minister, and was sent, as a Messenger from that Church, to the Apostle in his Bonds; and he is supposed by many to be the same, that is called *Epaphras*. *Col.* i. 7, and iv. 12, and *Philemon* ver. 2.

† As *Life* and *Health* are *in themselves* Mercies, and *Sickness* and *Death* are *the Fruit of Sin*; it is, in that View, a Mercy, even to a good Man, to be restored to Health for the Service of God, and the Good of others, after a threatning Illness; though in the View of the *Consequences* of Death, in a happy Exchange of this frail and mortal Life for a blessed Immortality, 'tis better for himself to die, than to live in this troublesome and sinful World. (See *Chap.* i. 23.) And though the Apostle was so much affected with *Epaphroditus*'s Sickness; yet he seems to have made no Attempt for healing him in the miraculous Way; while he, doubtless, as well as others, pray'd for his Recovery. The Reason of this might be, because he could not perform such Miracles at all Times, and whenever he pleased; there being no Virtue in himself for it, as there was in our Lord, which was a Glory and Power peculiar to him; (*Luke* vi. 19, and viii. 46) and because miraculous Signs were for them *that believe not*, to confirm the Gospel to them, as the Apostle said of *Tongues*: (1 Cor. xiv. 22.) But there seems not to have been any such Occasion for working this Miracle.

29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all Gladness; and hold such in Reputation:

29. See therefore that, according to my Desire and Hope, and your own warm Professions of Love to him, while he was absent, and in Danger of Death, ye cordially embrace him, as a Servant of Christ, and for his sake, who has return'd him alive and well to you: Receive him, I say, with all spiritual Joy, as well as with humane, civil and friendly Affection: And let all such faithful Labourers in the Gospel, as he is, be esteemed very highly, and treated with great Honour among you, for their Work's Sake; (1 *Thess.* v. 13) And ye ought in a special Manner to shew the highest Regard to *Epaphroditus*;

30 Because for the Work of Christ he was nigh unto Death, not regarding his Life to supply your Lack of Service toward me.

30. Because it was by means of the great Fatigues he underwent for Christ's Sake, in Love to him, and Zeal for his Interest and Glory, that he contracted the Illness, which brought him so near the Point of Death; he having been excessive in his Labours, even to the neglecting a due Care of his Health; as not regarding his own Life, but willingly hazarding it, by going on my Messages, and preaching the Gospel to such, as I could not come at in my Confinement; and by often attending upon, and ministring to me, and so making up the Want of your personal Assistances, which, had ye been here, ye readily would have afforded me; but which, at this Distance, ye were incapable of.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How sweet and endearing are Arguments, taken from divine Consolations, and inward Glowings of Love and Compassion, to brotherly Kindness and Condescension, Humility and Meekness, and a sincere Regard to each other's Edification and Comfort! And how engaging to all this is the matchless Example of Christ! Though he was really God, possessed of the divine Nature and Perfection, equally with the Father, and so had a rightful Claim to all the Honours of Deity; yet, in his infinite Love and Pity to his People, he stooped so low, as to assume human Nature into personal Union with himself; and in this Nature, instead of shining forth in all the Lustres of Godhead, he ordinarily concealed them, and, as it were, disrobed himself of them; and, appearing in the mean State of a Servant, submitted to the lowest and severest Course of Obedience to his Father's Will and Law, till he finished it in the painful and shameful Death of the Cross. And O how meritorious and pleasing to God the Father was this! He, as the just Reward of it, has exalted him in human Nature and Office-Authority, to the highest Dignity and Honour in Heaven, that this divine Saviour might be treated, as the Object of all Adoration and Homage, and the whole World of Angels and Men might be brought into an intire Subjection to him, as Lord of all, to the Glory of God the Father. With what humble Caution, Self-diffidence, Reverence of God and holy Diligence, should Believers attend to the Things, that relate to their own Salvation! And what rich Encouragement have they to it; since God, of his own good Pleasure, is ever present with them, to excite, assist and animate their holy Inclinations and Performances! And how highly does it concern them to behave meekly and inoffensively, as becomes the Children of God, with shining Evidence, and a recommending Profession of the Gospel of Salvation, in the Midst of a corrupt and degenerate Age! And O what a Pleasure is it to the faithful Servants of Christ, to see this happy Fruit of their Labours! For the producing of this, they could willingly submit, not only to Imprisonment, but even to Death itself, and rejoice in the noble Testimony they should thereby bear to him; And when they are under Confinement for his Sake, How desirous are they to hear that the Church prospers, and to send such to minister to them, as may be most acceptable and useful among them! Though there be too many that seek their own Things, rather than the

Things of Jeſus Chriſt, which is for a Lamentation; yet, bleſſed be God, there are ſome, who, like *Timothy* and *Epaphroditus*, as well as *Paul*, are heartily and affectionately diſpoſed to lay themſelves out diſintereſtedly in the Cauſe of the dear Redeemer, and have longing Deſires to be helpful to the Faith and Joy of his People: All ſuch are to be received with Gladneſs, and to be highly eſteemed and honoured for their Works Sake. But O how affecting is it, when ſuch eminent Inſtruments are confined in Bonds, or are ſick nigh unto Death! What a ſympathizing Spirit is there, in ſuch Circumſtances, between them and all that truly fear the Lord! How willing are they to aſſiſt one another! And what Matter of rejoicing is it, when God ſets his Priſoners free, and has Mercy on his ſick Servants, and on their mourning and praying Friends, in reſtoring them to Health, and to Capacities and Opportunities of further Service!

CHAP. III.

The Apoſtle cautions the Philippians *againſt* Judaizing *falſe Teachers, whom he deſcribes, as he alſo does true Chriſtians in Oppoſition to them,* 1—3. *Recites his own former Privileges, and renounces all theſe for Chriſt,* 4—8. *Expreſſes his earneſt Deſire to be found in him, and his preſſing on toward Perfection,* 9—14. *And recommends his own Example to the Imitation of other Believers, in Oppoſition to the Behaviour of carnal Profeſſors,* 15—21.

TEXT.

1 FInally, *my Brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the ſame Things to you, to me indeed* is *not grievous, but for you* it is *ſafe.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. AFTER all, * my dear Brethren, I would excite you to a truely ſpiritual Joy, not merely in any external Helps, Means and Privileges; but intirely in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, under a Senſe of his Love and Care, and of the Bleſſings ye have, and hope for in him, that ye may not be perverted, and ſo robbed of your holy Joy, by *judaizing* Teachers; I have therefore thought proper to write the very ſame Things, to caution you againſt them, that I delivered by Word of Mouth, while I was preſent with you, and have ordered *Epaphroditus* to remind you of; (*Chap.* ii. 25.) and this I do without any Reluctance, as if it were irkſome and tedious to me to repeat old Things, but with the greateſt Pleaſure, to ſhew that I am ſtill of the ſame Mind, and that my Concern is as great for your Edification, and for the Purity of the Goſpel among you, as ever: And it is needful, for your Preſervation and Eſtabliſhment in the Faith, to have theſe Things repeatedly inculcated upon you, and committed to Writing, that ye may be put in Remembrance of them, (2 *Pet.* i. 12.) and the more deeply

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* *Finally* is not here, as often in other Places, a Note of concluding the Epiſtle; for the Apoſtle was got to but about the Middle of it, and was now entering upon his main Deſign in it: But it may be of like Import with *farthermore*, which is uſed, by Way of Tranſition to what follows; and yet *rejoicing in the Lord*, may look both backwards and forwards, *backward* to what he had ſaid about *Troubles* and *Joys*; and *forward* to what he was going to add againſt *judaizing* Teachers, and for recommending Chriſt and glorying in him.

impressed with them; and may have Opportunity, on all Occasions, of reviewing them, to secure you from all the Uncertainties and Mistakes of oral Tradition about them.

2 Beware of Dogs, beware of Evil-workers, beware of the Concision.

2. Take heed then of those Zealots, and have a strict and watchful Eye upon them, who really are as worthless, vile and contemptible, as the *Jews* have thought the *Gentiles* to be, while they used to denominate them *Dogs*, (Mat. xv. 26, 27.) and as the antient false Prophets were, that are spoken of as *dumb Dogs that could not bark*; (If. lvi. 10.) but they are sometimes, as evidently malicious and injurious, fierce and biting; and at others, as sly and fawning to serve a Turn, as the worst of that Sort of Animals can be; and are justly excluded from the Blessings of the heavenly Kingdom. (*Rev.* xxii. 15.) Ye can't be too watchful against them; and therefore I repeat the Charge, Stand upon your Guard against these evil Doers, and *deceitful Workers*, (2 Cor. xi. 13.) who labour to destroy the Truth of the Gospel, and the Purity of the Church of Christ. Still further to strengthen my Caution, and engage your Attention to it, I say again, the third Time, Beware, with the utmost Circumspection, of that pernicious Set of Men, who glory in their Circumcision, which, as it is now no longer an Ordinance of God, is no better than merely cutting off the Foreskin of the Flesh *; and who rend and tear the Church to Pieces; and instead of having the Covenant of Grace confirmed to them by that Rite, as formerly, they, by depending upon it, cut themselves off from Christ, and all the Benefits of the Gospel-Covenant, and can't be deem'd real Christians, whatever their Pretences be. (See *Gal.* v. 2—4.)

3 For we are the Circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no Confidence in the Flesh.

3. For, in Opposition to these vain Boasters, who may be more properly called the *Concision*, than the *Circumcision*, we, who are sincere Believers in Christ, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, are after the best and most effectual Manner circumcised in Heart, (*Deut.* xxx. 6, and *Rom.* ii. 28, 29) as being *renew'd in the Spirit of our Minds*; (Ephes. iv. 23) and so are Partakers of that *Circumcision of Christ*, which is signified by our Baptism; (*Col.* ii. 11, 12) and are really in Covenant with God: We accordingly worship God, not by ceremonial Rites and carnal Ordinances, nor with merely external Expressions and Modes of religious Adoration; but with our whole Souls, in the Exercise of spiritual Graces, under the Light and Influence of the Holy

* *The Concision* signifies *the cutting off*, in Allusion to *Circumcision*, which the *Judaizers* gloried in; but which the Apostle, to shew his Contempt of what they so much boasted of, calls the *Concision*; and he speaks of *the Circumcision*, or of what had been signified by it, as the Privilege and Honour of real Christians, whether they had been circumcised in the Flesh, or not; calling them *the Circumcision*, (ver. 3) meaning in a spiritual Sense the *Circumcised*; the Abstract being here, as elsewhere, put for the Concrete, according to the Note on *Rom.* ii. 26.

Spirit, according to Gospel-Institution, and to our blessed Lord's own Direction: (*John* iv. 23, 24) And (καυχώμεθα) we glory with abundant Joy; yea, even triumph in Christ, and in our own Interest in him, as the Lord *our Righteousness and Strength*, (If. xlv. 24, 25) and as our only Mediator and Ground of Acceptance and Hope: And we renounce all Dependence upon, and Expectation of Favour with God on account of Circumcision, or any other *Jewish* Ordinances, that pertain to the Flesh; or of any thing whatsoever, that we have done, or can do, in performing the Righteousness of the Law (*ver.* 6) by natural Principles, which, for their Corruption and Weakness, may very fitly be stiled *Flesh*. (John iii. 6, Rom ii. 5, and viii. 5—9. See the Notes on those Passages in the *Romans*.)

4 Though I might also have Confidence in the Flesh. If any other Man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the Flesh, I more:

4. Tho' as to myself, were there any Dependence to be had upon, or any Advantage to be found in Ordinances and Privileges, that pertain to the Flesh, or in any thing, that the *Judaizers* have done in their carnal unregenerate State, I might boast of these Things as much as they. If any of them imagines that he has Ground or Matter of Confidence toward God, on account of fleshly Privileges and Performances, I could claim as much on this Foot, as any one of them all; and more than the Generality of them*, and especially than any Proselyte can do.

5 Circumcised the Eighth Day, of the Stock of Israel, of the Tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the Law, a Pharisee;

5. As to *External Privileges*, I was duly circumcised the eighth Day, according to God's Appointment: (*Gen.* xvii. 12.) I am not a Proselyte from among the *Gentiles*, but a true native *Israelite* of that Tribe, which descended from *Jacob* by his beloved *Benjamin*, the Son of his dearest Wife *Rachel*; a Royal Tribe, from which the first King of *Israel* was taken; and a Tribe, that never revolted to the idolatrous Worship of *Jeroboam*'s Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, as all the rest, except that of *Judah*, did: I am a *Jew* of pure Extract, both by Father and Mother's Side, and not an *Helenist*; but of that Sort of *Jews*, that used the *Hebrew* Language in Synagogue-Worship: And I was, by Education and Profession, a *Pharisee*, the strictest of all the *Jewish* Sects, in their Observation of the Law of God, and the Traditions of the Elders. (*Acts* xxi. 6, and xxvi. 5, and *Gal.* i. 13.)

6 Concerning Zeal, persecuting the Church; touching the Righteousness which is in the Law, blameless.

6. And as to my *Regard* to these Privileges, and doing what I thought my Duty in correspondence to them, I came behind none of those, that pride themselves in them; my Zeal for them was so flaming, that I was vehemently enraged, and went into most furious Methods of Cruelty and Violence against the Church of Christ, (*Acts* xxii. 3, 4,

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* Mr. *Peirce* thought the Apostle had his Eye upon some particular Person among the *Philippians*, that endeavoured to draw them off from *Christ* to *Judaism*; and that he was only a *Proselyte*, and not a native *Jew*; and so the Apostle had more to boast of than he.

and

and xxvi. 11.) becauſe their Principles and Profeſſion lay in direct Oppoſition to mine: And at the ſame Time, I was ſo ſincere and careful an Obſerver both of the ceremonial and moral Law of *Moſes*, that neither mine own Conſcience did, nor any other Perſon could charge me with any flagrant, or remarkable Tranſgreſſion of either Parts of that Law; having *lived in all good Conſcience before God*, according to my Light, all the Days of my *Judaiſm*, (Acts xxiii. 1) and having verily thought that I did God good Service in perſecuting his New-Teſtament-Church. (*Acts* xxvi. 9.)

7 But what Things were Gain to me, thoſe I counted Loſs for Chriſt.

7. But how much ſoever I once thought, and any carnal *Jew* would have flatter'd himſelf, that theſe Things were of the greateſt Advantage to me in my ſpiritual Concerns, as ſufficient to ſecure the Favour of God and Heaven; yet when he called me by his Grace, I ſaw that they were all miſguided, empty and deficient; and that my Dependence upon the beſt of them was unprofitable and injurious to me; and ſo I abandon'd them all, in Point of Truſt and Confidence, for Chriſt, and (ἡγημαι) I eſteemed them as nothing, and worſe than nothing to be relied upon, in Competition with him.

8 Yea doubtleſs, and I count all things but Loſs, for the Excellence of the Knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord; for whom I have ſuffered the Loſs of all Things, and do count them but Dung that I may win Chriſt.

8. Yea, and (ἀλλα μενουγε και ἡγεμαι) ſo far am I, even now, after many Years Knowledge and Experience of the Goſpel-Way of Salvation by Jeſus Chriſt alone, from altering my Mind as to this Matter, that I really ſtill reckon, not only thoſe Things, but even all that I have done, in a Way of religious and moral Obedience ſince my Converſion, which is much more than is found in any carnal *Jew*; I count all this, as well as every worldly Enjoyment, to be Loſs, in compariſon with the ſuperabundantly more excellent, fiducial and experimental Knowledge of Chriſt, as the only Saviour, whom I humbly claim and truſt in as my Lord, according to the Goſpel-diſcovery of him; for whoſe Sake, and in Exchange for whom, I have deem'd all Things, tho' not abſolutely, yet in a comparative View, and in Point of Confidence in them, as no better than Loſs; and have caſt them all away, as Goods are thrown over-board, when they endanger ſinking the Ship; and I do ſtill reckon them to be not only ſo, but even, if reſted in for Salvation, like ſuch worthleſs and contemptible Things, as Dung, Dregs, or Dog's-meat, (σκυβαλα) to the End that, (ἱνα) by an utter Renunciation of them in Point of Juſtification, I may at length gain a complete Enjoyment of Chriſt, and of all his ſaving Benefits.

9 And be found in him, not having mine own Righteouſneſs, which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Chriſt, the Righteouſ-

9. And this I do, that when the ſtrict and public Scrutiny, Trial and final Deciſion of my State ſhall come on, I may be found in Chriſt with Safety, as in a City of Refuge; and may be found to be vitally united with him, as a Member of his myſtical Body, and comprehended in him, as my Covenant-head; and ſo may ſtand before God in Judgment, not as appearing at his Bar in my own perſonal Righte-

ness which is of God by Faith:

Righteousness, to be dealt with according to its Desert, which at best is very imperfectly answerable to the Requirements of God's holy Law; but as clothed with, and judged according to the Merit of that Righteousness, which consists, not in Faith itself, but is unto, and upon all true Believers through Faith in Christ; (*Rom.* iii. 22) even that Righteousness, which he wrought out, by his Obedience and Sufferings unto Death, to the full Satisfaction of Law and Justice in my Room and Stead; the Righteousness, which is of God's own appointing and accepting for Justification, and of his imputing, to discharge from Condemnation, and intitle to eternal Life, in a Way of Believing †.

10 *That I may know him, and the Power of his Resurrection, and the Fellowship of his Sufferings, being made conformable unto his Death?*

10. And my earnest Desire is, not only to be found in Christ at the last Day, but that in the mean while, and in order thereunto, I may have an experimental growing Acquaintance with him in the Glory of his Person and Offices, and in the Efficacy of his Resurrection, as the Head of the Body, for confirming my joyful Hopes of eternal Life, on that Foot, and in Virtue of it; (1 *Pet.* i. 3) and for animating me unto the most vigorous and active Obedience, whereby I may still further live to God, in Conformity to my risen Saviour; and may be daily led into holy Communion with him, in his Crucifixion, for *crucifying the Old Man, the Body of Sin, that it may be utterly destroyed*; (Rom. vi. 6) as also for patiently enduring all Sufferings,

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† This Context, I think, gives us a beautiful Gradation of the Apostle's renouncing all Trust and Confidence in any Righteousness, but that of Christ: He begins, *ver.* 5, 6, 7, with renouncing his *Jewish* Privileges, and his *Pharisaical* Righteousness, which consisted in his Observance of the *moral*, as well as ceremonial Precepts of the Law; for some, at least, of the *Pharisees* expected to be justified, not merely by a ceremonial, but also by a *moral* Righteousness, joined with it, in Conformity to the Law, as appears from our Lord's Parable of the *Pharisee* and *Publican*, Luke xviii. 11, 12; and such a Pharisee the famous *Gamaliel* seems to have been, if we may judge of his moral Character from the Probity and Piety toward God, that breathed in his admirable Speech, *Acts* v. 34—39: And *Paul* the Pharisee, who was brought up under him, was as conscientious an Observer of moral Obedience, as any other of that Sect could be supposed to be; since he declares that, even in that State, according to his then Sense of Things, he had *lived in all good Conscience before God.* (Acts xxiii 1.) And then he advances, *ver.* 8, 9, to a discarding of all Trust, not only in *this*, but also in his own personal Righteousness, *after* he became a Christian: For having said, with a Reference back to the Things before mention'd, *what Things were Gain to me, those I counted Loss for Christ*, (ver. 7) he adds, (ver. 8) *Yea, doubtless, and I do count Loss for Christ*, not *those Things* only, as we have it before; (ver, 7) but *all Things*, without Exception or Reserve of any Thing done by him, *after*, as well as *before* Conversion: For *ver.* 9 shows that what he intended was, all Righteousness of his own for Justification according to the Requirements of the Law; and he declares that he persisted still in renouncing even this, as insufficient to justify him; and so he sets aside all imaginable Righteousness of our own, in Opposition to that of *Faith*; and even *Faith itself*, which is as much a Work of Righteousness, and as much our own, inherent in us, and acted by us, as any other Grace, or Instance of evangelical Obedience: He disclaims regarding *this*, as his justifying Righteousness, while he accurately distinguishes Faith from this Righteousness, which he don't say is Faith itself, but is *the Righteousness, which is of God through Faith*, and *by Faith*, as God imputes it, and Faith receives it. (See the Note on *Rom.* iii. 20.) And his *winning*, or *gaining Christ*, and being *found in him*, seems to relate, not merely to his having an Interest in Christ, and being united to him, but to look forward to what he should be at Death and Judgment; for he had already, and knew that he had, a sure Interest in Christ, and so, in that Sense, was already in him; and yet he speaks of his present Desire and Pursuit, that he might, upon Trial, *be found* a Partaker of this comprehensive Blessing, which evidently relates to some Time to come, as express'd in the following Verses.

even

even unto Death, for his sake, in Conformity to him, who died, and rose again.

11 *If by any Means I might attain unto the Resurrection of the Dead:*

11. This is my constant Aim and Pursuit, that by these, and all other Means of God's Appointment, I in due Time * may arrive, like Sailors to their Port, at that complete State of all possible Blessedness and Glory, which the Children of God shall enjoy at the Resurrection of the Just, when their mortal Bodies shall be raised, in a Re-union with their Souls, to immortal Life.

12 *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.*

12. I own that I have not already † received the Prize, which I am running for, nor (ηδη τετελειωμαι) am I yet, like those that have finished their Course, made perfect in Holiness, as I fain would be, and as I must be, before I am honoured with *the Crown of Righteousness*; (2 Tim. iv. 8) But (διωκω) I pursue my Race, stretching forth with the utmost Eagerness, that, in God's Way and Time, I may reach Perfection, and lay hold on Eternal Life; for the attaining of which (κατεληφθην) I was laid hold on by the Power and Grace of Christ, who met me in the Way to *Damascus*, pluck'd me as a Brand out of the Fire, and took Possession of me for himself, that I might be eternally saved.

13 *Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but* this *one Thing* I do, *forgetting those Things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those Things which are before,*

14 *I press toward the Mark, for the Prize of the high Calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

13, 14. Whatsoever others, among your Judaizing Boasters, may pretend to, I again, my Brethren, freely acknowledge, that I do not reckon myself to have already reached to, or obtained a State of perfect Holiness, any more than of perfect Happiness; but mine Eye is fixed upon it, as the one Point in View; and in all my running for it, like Racers in your neighbouring Games, I don't look back to the Law and my judaizing Performances of it, nor to the Advances I have already made in Gospel-Holiness; nor do I regard them, as if these Attainments were sufficient, and I might stop there: But, as it were forgetting them, and stretching forth (επεκτεινομενος) with all my Might, to come up to the further Duties and Exercises of Grace that lie before me, I pursue my Course toward Christ and Heaven, according to my main Scope, (κατα σκοπον)

* *If by any Means* (ει πως) here, and, *if that I may* (ει και) *v.* 12, can't be fairly understood to signify, that the Apostle was in any doubt about his own final and complete Salvation; since he so often speaks of his firm Expectation of it: And therefore the Particle (ει) *if*, in these Places, is not to be consider'd as a Particle of Doubting, but may be render'd *that*, as it is twice together, *Acts* xxvi. 23; and so, in the present Case, it only intimates the Necessity of using the Means, in order to attaining the End. (See *Zanchy* and *Peirce* on this Verse.)

† *Already attained* (ελαβον) is a different Word from *might attain*, (καταντησω) in the preceding Verse. *There* it alludes to Persons arriving in a Harbour, and is used in that Sense *Acts* xviii. 19, 24, and xxvii. 12, and xxviii. 13: But *here* it alludes to a Victor's receiving the Prize; and so this, and several other Terms in the following Verses, are *agonistical*, taken from the *Grecian* Games, then in use; one of which was running Races for a Prize, that was to be won; and 'tis in this View that we are to consider *pressing toward the Mark for the Prize*; (ver. 14) not as though the Prize were to be gained for the running, (see the Notes on *Rom.* vi. 23, and ix. 16) as in the *Grecian* Games; but only at the End of it, as running is the necessary Means, according to God's Appointment, of obtaining it.

fixing

fixing mine Eye upon it, as Archers do upon their Mark, that I may reach to a State of perfect Holineſs, in order to my receiving the Prize of Eternal Glory; to the obtaining of which, God has called me, and every true Believer, by Chriſt Jeſus, (2 *Theſſ.* ii. 14, and 1 *Pet.* v. 10) with an high and heavenly Calling, that comes from Heaven, leads to it, and ſhall iſſue in it *; the Glory of which is to be obtained only in and through him, with whom *our Life is hid in God, that when he who is our Life ſhall appear, we alſo may appear with him in Glory.* (Col. iii. 3, 4.)

15 *Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: And if in any thing ye be otherwiſe minded, God ſhall reveal even this unto you.*

15. As many of us therefore as are, though not in all reſpects perfect †; yet ſo far advanced in Chriſtianity, that, in a qualified Senſe, we may be called perfect, as all the eſſential Parts of the new Creature are formed in us, to a much greater Degree than in weak Believers: Let us attend to this main Point of counting all Things but Loſs for Chriſt, that we may be found in him, and be thoroughly conformed to him: (*ver.* 7—11.) And if there be any of you that are right, as to this important Doctrine, and yet have different Sentiments from me, and from thoſe that are like-minded with me, as to the Continuance of the *Moſaic* Law, and of *Jewiſh* Privileges, God will clear up even this to you, and *that* e'er long, when the Temple and *Jewiſh* State ſhall be demoliſhed.

16 *Nevertheleſs, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the ſame Rule, let us mind the ſame Thing.*

16. However, leaving that Matter to God, to diſcover it to ſuch, in his own Way and Time; as far as we ſeverally have hitherto reached in Knowledge, Grace or Holineſs, Let us keep cloſe to one and the ſame Rule, and practiſe according to it, as it's plainly revealed in the ſacred Canon, (κανων) which, among other Things, aſſures us, that *in Chriſt Jeſus, neither Circumciſion availeth any thing, nor Uncircumciſion; but Faith which works by Love,* or *a new Creature;* (Gal. v. 6, and vi. 15, 16) and let us be unanimous in our Adherence to this Rule.

17 *Brethren, be Followers together of me, and mark them which walk ſo, as ye have us for an Enſample.*

17. I would fain have you, my beloved Brethren, concur one with another, in following my Example in Principle and Practice, as to the forementioned Things, in which I follow Chriſt; and let it be your great Care to obſerve thoſe Believers, as Patterns worthy of Imitation, who walk according to the Truth of the Goſpel §, after the ſame Manner, as ye have it exemplified in myſelf and other Miniſters or

* As *in Chriſt Jeſus* may relate either to the *high Calling of God,* or to *the Prize,* the Paraphraſe is formed to take in both Senſes.

† It is plain that by *as many as be perfect,* the Apoſtle could not mean, that were ſo in the ſtricteſt Senſe of the Expreſſion; becauſe he had juſt before ſaid of himſelf, that he *was not already perfect;* and yet he here puts himſelf in among thoſe that he ſtiles perfect; and 'tis not to be ſuppoſed that any other Chriſtians were more perfect than himſelf. (See the Note on 1 *Cor.* ii. 6.)

§ The Apoſtle, according to his wonted Wiſdom and Modeſty, mentions the Example of others, as well as his own, to prevent all Appearance of Oſtentation, as though he would only propoſe himſelf to their Imitation.

Christians, that are led into the Spirituality and Light of the New Testament-Dispensation.

18 *(For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the Enemies of the Cross of Christ;*

18. This I would recommend with the greatest Earnestness to you, to prevent your being misled and perverted by Judaizing Teachers: For there are many of them, of whom I frequently warned you when I was with you; and, finding that they still continue obstinate, and are so busy among you, I now again tell you with a Grief of Heart, which forces Tears from mine Eyes, in Consideration of the Dishonour brought to Christ and the Gospel, and of your Danger of being perverted by them, as well as of their own deplorable Condition, that, whatsoever their Pretences be, they are in Reality, both doctrinally * and practically, the worst of all Enemies to the fundamental Article of Salvation alone by a crucified Christ, through his atoning Death, and are utterly averse to taking up their Cross and following him; all which will turn to their own Confusion.

19 *Whose End is Destruction, whose God* is their *Belly, and* whose *Glory* is *in their Shame: Who mind earthly Things)*

19. Who, in the winding up of Things at last, will find it to issue in their eternal Perdition, as they *are deceitful Workers, whose End shall be according to their Works*; (2 Cor. xi. 13) Nor can it be expected to be otherwise with such Sort of Men, who make the Gratification of carnal Views and Pleasures their principal Aim, and so set up the Pampering of their own Appetites, as their chief Good, instead of, and in Opposition to God and his Glory; who also are so fond of deceiving, and making a Gain of their Converts to promote their secular Interests, as even to boast of it, which, instead of being to their Honour, is really Matter of the greatest Shame to them; and who attend to, relish and pursue nothing, under all their religious Profession, but mean, empty, uncertain, unsatisfying and defiling Enjoyments, that are of an earthly Nature, and relate only to this lower World.

20 *For our Conversation is in Heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.*

20. 'Tis not these worthless and pernicious Leaders that ye are to follow; but ye ought to imitate us, who are of a contrary Spirit, Temper and Behaviour, suitable to our more excellent State and Character: For as we are Citizens of the celestial *Jerusalem*, our Hearts and Affections, rising above the Things of Earth and Sense, ascend up to Heaven, and (το πολίτευμα) our Traffic lies in the daily Correspondence we carry on there with Christ himself, (*Col.* iii. 1) from whence we also look, long and hope for the great and only Saviour, to descend at the last Day, even our Lord

* They were *doctrinal* Enemies to the Cross of Christ, as they did not depend upon his Death alone for Salvation, but made Circumcision, and the Observation of the whole Law of *Moses*, necessary to it; and they were *practical* Enemies to his Cross, as they pleaded for *Mosaic* Rites, to avoid Reproach and Persecution from the *Jews*, and to indulge their sensitive Appetites, instead of crucifying the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts, in Conformity to, and by Virtue derived from the Crucifixion of Christ.

Jesus

Jesus Christ, who hath promised to *come again, and receive us to himself, that where he is, there we may be also.* (John xiv. 3.)

21 *Who shall change our vile Body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious Body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all Things unto himself.*

21. Who will then transform these vile and mortal Bodies of ours, which carry the Marks of our Humiliation in their Weakness, Weariness and Infirmity, and in their being Clogs and Hindrances to the spiritual and holy Exercises of the Soul, since, and by means of the Fall, and which will be meaner and more contemptible still in the Rottenness and Corruption of the Grave; he will then make a glorious Change upon them, that they may rise in a beautiful and shining Resemblance of his own most glorious Body; (See 1 *Cor.* xv. 47, 48, 49) according to the wonderful Energy and Operation of his Almighty Power, which can be no less than divine, (*Acts* xxvi. 8, *Rom.* iv. 17. and *Ephes.* i. 19, 20) by which our Blessed Lord is able to overcome all Difficulties, as he certainly will, in bringing every thing, that opposes him, into an intire Subjection to himself, as well as in destroying the last Enemy, which is Death (1 *Cor.* xv. 26.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

What need have Christians to be often warned of Seducers! Faithful Ministers should never be weary of cautioning them, or of putting them upon the most diligent Watch against those, that carp and cavil at the Purity of the Gospel, and are themselves such Workers of Iniquity, as to be both doctrinally and practically grievous Enemies to the Merit, Virtue and Honour of a crucified Jesus. They trust in something of their own, instead of him and his Righteousness; and yet they are sensual and carnal, and even glory in the most shameful Enormities, and so cut themselves off from all the Blessings of the Covenant of Grace, and entail Everlasting Destruction upon themselves. But O how happy is it to be circumcised in Heart, to be spiritual and evangelical Worshippers of God, to rejoice and glory in the Lord Jesus Christ, and to place no Confidence in external Privileges and Zeal for them; no, nor in our own moral or religious Righteousness! None of these are to be set in Competition with Christ, or relied upon for Acceptance with God to Eternal Life. They are all to be laid aside as nothing; yea, as Loss and Dung, not as in themselves, but as set up in Opposition to the saving Knowledge of Christ, and being found at Death and Judgment in Union with him, and interested in that Righteousness of his, which is made over for Justification through Faith in him. And yet how carefully should we guard against neglecting Sanctification and Holiness, which are as necessary to our enjoying God, as Justification itself! And how desirous ought we to be of having such a Knowledge of Christ, as shall be a Means of deriving Virtue from his Death and Resurrection, to make us conformable to him in both, by dying unto Sin, and living unto God! The most eminent Believers upon Earth are far from being perfect herein; and therefore, without taking up with present Attainments, should be continually pressing onwards after a Perfection in all Knowledge, Grace and Holiness, till they shall reach it, at the End of their Race, in a better World, according to what Christ designed them for, when he laid hold of them by his Spirit. Though some Christians are more advanced in Light and Experience than others; yet they all ought to be of the same Mind, with respect to these important Points; and, as far as they have attained, should walk together in brotherly Love, and according to the Rule of God's Word: And if there be any thing of less Consequence, in which their Sentiments differ, they should bear with one another, and leave it to God to convince those that are mistaken, as to such Things, after all proper Methods have been unsuccessfully try'd, in the Spirit of Meekness, to set them right. How ambitious should we be of carefully observing, and copying after those, who, like the Apostle, set us the most laudable Example; whose Hearts, Affections and Conversation are

much in Heaven, like Citizens of that holy and delightful State, where Jeſus our Saviour lives in all his Glory; and from whence Believers look, with longing Deſire and Hope, for his Return to take them up thither! And O what an amazingly happy Change will he then make upon theſe frail, contemptible and mortal Bodies! He will then form them into the Likeneſs of his own moſt glorious Body, by an Act of divine Omnipotence, which ſurmounts all Difficulties, and by which he himſelf is, and will prove to be able to vanquiſh Death, and all his and our Enemies.

CHAP. IV.

The Apoſtle moſt affectionately exhorts the Philippians *to ſtand faſt in the Lord,* ver. 1. *Gives Directions to ſome particular Perſons among them, and to them all in general,* 2—9. *Expreſſes his great Satisfaction in the Supply they had ſent him, and his own Contentment in every Condition of Life, adding a Doxology to God the Father,* 10—20. *Salutes them, and ſends the Salutations of others; and cloſes all with his uſual Benediction,* 21—23.

TEXT.

1 THerefore, *my Brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my Joy and Crown, ſo ſtand faſt in the Lord,* my *dearly beloved.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. AS, therefore, ye have hitherto continued in the Faith and Fellowſhip of the Goſpel, and given good Proof of your holy Obedience; (*Chap.* i. 5, and ii. 12) and as I have exhorted you to follow my Example in a perſevering Dependence on Chriſt, and preſſing toward Perfection, till we get to Heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour, (*Chap.* iii. 8—21) I earneſtly intreat you, my Brethren in the Faith, to abide ſtedfaſt, and unſhaken in your fiducial Adherence to, and holy Profeſſion of the Lord Jeſus, and in his Strength, as your Head and Saviour, whatever Difficulties and Dangers ye may be expoſed to for it; and I do this with the greateſt Affection to, and Hope concerning you, who, in Conſideration of your commendable Behaviour hitherto, are ſo greatly endeared to me, that I moſt heartily love you, and long for your further Eſtabliſhment and Proficiency, as alſo for an Opportunity of ſeeing you again, (*Chap.* i. 8) as the dear Seals of my Miniſtry, whom I think of, as my Joy and Crown of rejoicing now, and as to be yet more abundantly ſo, in the *Preſence of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt at his coming,* (1 Theſſ. ii. 19.) In the Thoughts of which, I want Words ſufficient to expreſs the Ardors and Overflowings of my Heart to you *, my moſt affectionately beloved Friends and Brethren in the Lord.

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* What a Pile of Words does the Apoſtle here heap up, to expreſs the Fervors of his Love to theſe *Philippians*, and ingratiate himſelf, after his uſual Manner, with them; as though they, and they only, had ingroſſed his Affections.

2. *I beseech Euodias, and I beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same Mind in the Lord.*

2. I in a particular Manner recommend it to *Euodias*, and do the same to *Syntyche*, that they, laying aside all Differences, unanimously agree one with another, and with the whole Church in Love and Affection, and in the Doctrines of Christ; in their Adherence to them; and in a becoming Profession of them †.

3. *And I intreat thee also, true Yoke-fellow, help those Women which laboured with me in the Gospel, with Clement also, and* with *other my Fellow-labourers, whose Names* are *in the Book of Life.*

3. And I earnestly beseech you, my sincere and faithful Companion, who chearfully draw in the same Yoke with myself, for promoting the Interest of Christ §, that you would do your utmost to help forward this good Design, in the most prudent, tender and affectionate Manner, by advising and exhorting these two eminent Women, heartily to unite in the common Cause again, who were very diligent and assistant to me, though not in public Ministrations, yet in subserving my Work of preaching the Gospel, by private Instructions and Prayers, by their exemplary Behaviour, and their sympathising and undergoing great Labour and Sufferings with me, and taking Care of me in all my Wants and Trials, while I was engaged in that Work at *Philippi*; and who were alike serviceable to the excellent *Clement* *, and several others of my Brethren in the Ministry, that have embarked in the same glorious Cause, and taken great Pains, together with me, in spreading the Gospel; and of whom I am verily persuaded, from what appears of the Grace of God in them, that they are Favourites of Heaven, as certainly and particularly chosen of God to eternal Life, from the Foundation of the World, as if their Names had been registered, or inrolled in a Book, among the appointed Heirs of Salvation, (*Rev.* xvii. 8.)

4. *Rejoice in the Lord alway:* and *again I say, rejoice.*

4. As to the whole Body of true Believers among you, it is your Duty and Privilege, considering all the Blessings ye have in Hand and in Hope, to rejoice and triumph, not after a carnal, but spiritual Manner, in the Lord Jesus your Head and Saviour, as I have already told you, (*Chap.* iii. 1.) and now repeat it, that ye may do so on all Occasions, and in all Circumstances, whatever Sufferings or Tribulations ye may be exposed to on his Account. I say unto

† *Euodias* and *Syntyche* are most commonly thought to have been two Women of Note, that had been considerably eminent in the Church, but were now at Variance one with the other, and had been tamper'd with by the *Jewish* Zealots, to pervert them; and therefore the Apostle intreated them to be reconciled one to the other, and to continue stedfast in the Faith, and united with the Church.

§ Who it was, that the Apostle calls *true Yoke-fellow*, though well known to the Church at *Philippi*, is variously conjectured, with great Uncertainty, at this Distance of Time. Some suppose that it was the Husband, or Brother of one of the Women before mentioned; others, that it was some noted Companion, or Fellow-labourer of the Apostle's; and others, that it really was his Wife, they supposing him to be a married Man. (See Mr *Peirce*'s Note.) And it seems to me that the Help, which the Apostle desired this Person to give *Euodias* and *Syntyche*, related to a Misunderstanding that was between them.

* Who this *Clement* was, whether *Clemens Romanus*, or some other, is very uncertain, and of no Importance for us to know.

you now again that, even in the Midst of them all, it is your great Duty and Privilege to rejoice in the Lord, and in your Sufferings for his Sake, (*Chap.* i. 28, 29, and 1 *Pet.* iv. 13, 14) which, being patiently endured, are an Honour to him and yourselves, and will finally turn to your own best Account.

5 Let your Moderation be known unto all Men. The Lord is at Hand.

5. Maintain and discover a meek, patient and gentle Temper of Spirit (το επιεικες) towards all Men, and particularly toward your very Persecutors themselves; and a Weanedness of Affection from the Things of this Life, as knowing that the Lord Jesus is near at Hand to observe your Behaviour, and take your Part; and will soon appear to the Confusion of your *Jewish* Adversaries, at the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and will come, e're long, as the Judge of the whole World, to put an End to the present State of Things, and all your Afflictions, and to do Justice to your righteous Cause, and *render Tribulation to them that trouble you*, (2 Thess. i. 6.)

6 Be careful for nothing: but in every thing by Prayer and Supplication with Thanksgiving, let your Requests be made known unto God.

6. Whatever Difficulties, Wants, or Dangers may befal you, relating to this present World, Take Heed that ye don't perplex yourselves with anxious, cutting, distrustful and distracting Cares about any of them, (μηδεν μεριμνατε) how ye shall be able, either to bear up under them, or to avoid them, or get through them: But as a Remedy against this, (εν παντι) in every Time and Circumstance of Things, be they ever so afflictive, Let your Addresses be presented to God, who loves to hear you telling him the Desires of your Hearts, (though he perfectly knows them all before-hand) that ye may own your intire Dependence upon him, and pay the religious Homage due to him; and that he may glorify his own Name, as a God hearing Prayer. Let this be done with all Sorts of humble Petitions and Pleas, and with believing, earnest Importunity and Perseverance, in deprecating Evils that ye are attended with, or in Danger of, and in imploring the Blessings ye need; as also with chearful Gratitude, and high Ascriptions of Glory to him, under a Sense of your own Unworthiness, and of the Riches and Freeness of his Goodness and Grace, for all the Mercies that ye enjoy and hope for, in your very worst Condition, which might be worse still, relating to this World and that which is to come.

7 And the Peace of God, which passeth all Understanding, shall keep your Hearts and Minds through Christ Jesus.

7. And, in answer to your humble Importunity, and believing Requests, the most excellent Peace, which God gives and approves of; Peace with him, as your reconciled God and Father thro' his beloved Son, together with a sweet Sense of it in your own Souls; Peace of Conscience thro' the atoning Blood of Jesus; Peace with one another; and the Peace of a sanctified Heart, and of a quiet Calmness of Spirit with Regard to all other Persons and Things; even that Peace which exceeds all adequate Conceptions of Believers themselves, much more of those, that have not experienc'd it.

it. This most excellent Peace, whatsoever ye may suffer in the Body, will defend and guard your Hearts, as in a strong Garrison, (φρουρήσει) and fortify your Minds with a holy Composure; and so preserve your whole Souls from sinning, or fainting under your Troubles, and from apostatizing by Means of them; against which ye will be secured through the Knowledge of Christ, and your Union with him, as your Head and Saviour, and through his Merit and Sufferings for you.

8 *Finally, Brethren, whatsoever Things are true, whatsoever Things are honest, whatsoever Things are just, whatsoever Things are pure, whatsoever Things are lovely, whatsoever Things are of good Report; if there be any Virtue, and if* there *be any Praise, think on these Things.*

8. To close with a Recommendation of some general Duties to you, my Brethren beloved in the Lord, Whatsoever things are true and sincere in Words and Actions, Professions and Engagements, and are agreeable to the Word of Truth, and the Reason of Things, free from all Hypocrisy and Deceit: Whatsoever Things are venerable, decent and becoming, in Dress, Language and Deportment, according to your respective Stations and Relations, as Men and Christians: Whatsoever Things are just and due to God and Man, in all your Dealings with him and them: Whatsoever Things belong to Chastity and Purity of Mind, free from all Defilement of Sin in Heart, Speech and Behaviour: Whatsoever Things are of an amiable Nature, and render the Subjects and Practisers of them lovely in the Eyes of God and Man: Whatsoever Things are deem'd reputable, especially by the sober, wise and religious Part of Mankind, among whom *a good Name is rather to be chosen than great Riches.* (Prov. xxii. 1.) If there be any thing, as undoubtedly there is, in all this, or in whatsoever may be supposed to be added to it of a moral Nature, in the whole Compass of natural and reveal'd Religion, that is truly virtuous, brave and laudable; Let these Things dwell habitually upon your Minds; and often reflect upon them, and study their Nature, Obligation and Importance, in order to your putting them into Practice upon Christian-Principles, by divine Assistance, to the Glory of God, and the Credit of your holy Profession of Christ's Name, and to your own and others Good.

9 *Those Things which ye have both learned and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: And the God of Peace shall be with you.*

9. These and such like excellent Things, relating to a holy Life and Conversation, in all the Duties of Morality, as well as of Piety, which ye have acquired the Knowledge of, (ἐμάθετε) as the Disciples of Jesus, and have professed to assent and consent to, and approve, as right and fit for regulating your own Conduct; and which ye have been taught by my public Ministry, and private Instructions, and have seen exemplified in my own Walk and Behaviour, when I was with you. Attend seriously unto these Things, and reduce them into Practice: And in this Way, God, who is at Peace with you through the Blood of Jesus, and is the Author of all inward Peace; and who delights in the Prosperity of his Servants, and in their orderly Deportment, as becomes the Gospel, will take Pleasure to dwell

among

among you, to manifest himself to you, as your God, and to own and bless you, as a People near and dear to him.

10 *But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your Care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked Opportunity.*

10. But, to give further Vent to the grateful Sense I have of your kind and Christian-Regards to me, I can't tell how to forbear repeating the great Satisfaction and Joy of my Soul, in reflecting on the Love and Grace of our Lord Jesus, who inclined your Hearts to act a friendly and affectionate Part toward me for his Sake now again, after your former Generosity, (*ver.* 15, 16) and after your seeming Neglect of me since that Time; inasmuch as your Concern for supplying my Wants, in my Imprisonment and Difficulties, has now, at length, visibly revived, and discover'd itself with Vigour, (ανεθαλετε) like a good Tree, that seemed barren in the Winter, but sprouts again in the Spring, and brings forth Fruit in its Season: For I find ye were all along solicitously thoughtful about sending to my Relief, only your Circumstances did not admit of your doing it so soon as ye desired; and ye had no Opportunity of conveying your Liberality to me.

11 *Not that I speak in respect of Want: For I have learned in whatsoever State I am,* therewith *to be content.*

11. I don't mention these Things, as though I were reduced to insupportable Wants, or were uneasy under those that attended me; or as though I rejoiced only, because they are now supplied by your Bounty; no, these Things are of little Account with me: For, through the Vicissitude of my Affairs, and a sanctified Use of them by divine Grace, I have been taught and enabled to learn and practise the great Lesson of Christian-Contentment in every State and Condition of this Life, into which Providence brings me; as being fully satisfied, that my heavenly Father orders what is best for me, and that he *will never leave, nor forsake me*; (Heb. xiii. 5) and as having, upon this Principle, a Sufficiency in myself (αυταρχης) of all Joy and Peace in believing, which supplies the Want of temporal good Things.

12 *I know both* how *to be abased, and I know* how *to abound: every where, and in all Things I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer Need.*

12. In this Manner I am brought to learn the happy and holy Skill of possessing my own Soul in Peace and Patience, when I am thrown into the most contemptible and humbling Circumstances, that I may not be dejected and discomposed by them; and I understand the Way of behaving without Elation of Mind, or being over-pleased and lifted up, when Providence smiles upon me: Wherever I am, and into what Situation of Things soever I be cast, I am well initiated in the sacred Knowledge (μεμυημαι) of conducting with an equal and becoming Temper of Spirit: When I am refreshed and filled with Provisions for bodily Sustenance; and when I am hungry for want of them; yea, when I have the greatest Affluence of the good Things of this Life; and when I am in the greatest Degree destitute of them, I am taught to exercise the Graces, and perform the

the Duties, that belong to these different and contrary Lots and Conditions, as to external Matters.

13 *I can do all Things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*

13. Not that I am so vain-glorious, as to think that I can do these great Things of myself, or even merely by the Strength of the Grace, that I have already received; but I find, by daily Experience, that I am enabled to perform, not only these, but every other Duty, that I am called to, as a Christian and an Apostle, through the continual concurring Aids and Assistances of Christ, by virtue of my Union with him, in whose Grace I am strong, (2 *Tim.* ii. 1) and who is ever with me to animate, excite and strengthen me for them.

14 *Notwithstanding, ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my Affliction.*

14. However, this don't at all lessen your Kindness to me, and Concern for me; nor detract from the Seasonableness of your Bounty: Ye have acted a truly Christian-part, which is very acceptable to me, and to God himself through Jesus Christ; (*ver.* 18) because of the Love, which ye have testified to the Lord, and to me, his Prisoner and Servant, in that ye sympathized with me in my Bonds and Tribulations, and sent a liberal and suitable Supply for my Relief under them.

15 *Now, ye Philippians, know also, that in the Beginning of the Gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no Church communicated with me, as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.*

15. And, (δὲ) to shew the grateful Sense I have, my dear *Philippian*-Brethren, of all your Kindness to me, I mention it to your Honour, and take Pleasure in reminding you of it, that not now of late only, but also when I was first in your Parts, and preached the Gospel to you; and particularly when I was about to take my Leave of you *, and to go from your *Macedonian*-Province into other Countries, to labour there in the Work of the Lord, no other Church besides yours contributed to my Support, that as I freely gave, and they received Spiritual Things, so they might give, and I receive of their Temporal Things; which certainly ought to have been done by other Churches; (1 *Tim.* v. 17, 18) though, that I might not seem mercenary, I never asked it of them. But great was your Liberality.

16 *For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my Necessity.*

16. For even while I was ministring at *Thessalonica*, where I met with the most violent and outrageous Opposition from the unbelieving *Jews*, (Acts xvii. 5, &c.) and was not supplied with Necessaries by the Christians of that rich City, but was obliged to labour with my own Hands, (1 *Thess.* ii. 9. and 2d Epist. iii. 8) ye, from Time to Time, sent generous Contributions for my comfortable Subsistence, in the pressing Circumstances that then attended me.

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* This should be render'd, according to the Latitude of the Tense, (ὅτε ἐξῆλθον) *when I was about to go from* Macedonia: For *Thessalonica* was the chief City of *Macedonia*; and the Apostle here mentions their sending to his Relief, while he was there, and speaks of it to their great Commendation, that they, and they only should do it, while he was in such an opulent City, and, through the Neglect of the Christians there, was forced to work with his own Hands for a Livelihood.

17 *Not because I desire a Gift: But I desire Fruit that may abound to your Account.*

17. I don't mention these Things, as a Fetch to get still more of you, as if I would desire you now to do any thing further of this Kind for me; no, but my great Aim in making this grateful Acknowledgment is, that it might be a Means of encouraging you to go on with your Christian-Generosity and Benevolence, in all other Cases, for promoting the Cause of Christ, as the genuine Fruit of your Faith, and Love to him and to his People, every where, as there may be Occasion; Fruit, that will turn, as to his Honour in this World, so to your own rich Advantage in the great Day of Account, for the World to come. (See *Mat.* xxv. 35—40, and *Heb.* vi. 10, 18.)

18 *But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the Things* which were sent *from you, an Odour of a sweet Smell, a Sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.*

18. But, as to myself in particular, I have all that I need for corporal Sustenance; and what ye have now sent is abundantly sufficient to supply my Wants: I have as much as I wish for; and my Soul is as full of Joy and Praise, as my Body is refreshed with your Benevolence; having received, as I hereby thankfully acknowledge, a repeated Testimony of your Affection, and a substantial Proof of it in the Collections, which ye sent me by the Hands of your faithful and beloved Messenger *Epaphroditus*, which, to allude to the Offerings under the Law, (*Lev.* ii. 1, 2, and iii. 16) are an Odour of a sweet-smelling Savour, a spiritual Sacrifice of Acknowledgment to God, which he accepts, and is highly pleased with, thro' Jesus Christ. (*Heb.* xiii. 16, and 1 *Pet.* ii. 5.)

19 *But my God shall supply all your Need, according to his Riches in Glory by Christ Jesus.*

19. And though, in my poor Circumstances, I am not able to make you any temporal Recompence; yet my Covenant-God and Father, who hath inclined your Hearts to shew all this Kindness to me, will not suffer you to be Losers by what ye do for him, or for any of his Saints and Servants for his Sake; but will make you rich Returns, not only with such temporal good Things, as he sees to be needful and best for you; but especially with all spiritual and eternal Blessings, that are suited to your various Wants; and he will do this in a glorious Manner, with an abundant Liberality, like himself, in Proportion to his own infinite Treasures of Grace and Glory, which he has provided in Christ, and gives with him, not for any Worthiness in yourselves, but on account of his Mediation, and by virtue of your Union and Communion with him, as your Head and Saviour.

20 *Now unto God and our Father* be *Glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

20. Now unto this all-sufficient and glorious God, who is the God of Nature, and of Providence and Grace, and the Giver of all temporal, spiritual and eternal Blessings, and is our Father in Christ Jesus, Let us jointly ascribe all possible Honour, Thanksgiving, Blessing and Praise, from henceforth to all Eternity, as is most due, both on account of what he is in himself, and has been, is, and for ever will be to us; In Testimony of our hearty Concurrence herein, may we all add, *Amen.*

21 *Salute every Saint in Christ Jesus. The Brethren which are with me greet you.*

21. Let my most cordial and Christian-Love be acceptable to all, that are professionally, and I trust really renew'd and sanctified, as Members of Christ, in Union with him, for whose Sake, I heartily wish that all Prosperity for both Worlds may attend them. All my Brethren in the Ministry,* that are with me at *Rome*, desire to be also most kindly remember'd to you.

22 *All the Saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Cæsar's Houshold.*

22. Yea, all the professing Believers in these Parts, who in Charity are looked upon as sanctified by the Holy Ghost, send the like Assurances of their Love and Christian-Respects to you; And more especially the Converts, that have been made from among the Domestics of *Nero*, the Emperor, and continue their civil Stations in his Family, are so far from being ashamed to own you, that they desire me to acquaint you with their affectionate Esteem of you, and fervent Prayers for your present and eternal Welfare.

23 *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ* be *with you all. Amen.*

23. To conclude, as I began, (*Chap.* i. 2) My great Desire and Prayer for all and every one of you is, that the free Favour of our Lord Jesus Christ, yours and mine, may be ever toward you, and be manifested in all its peculiar, abundant and distinguishing Fruits and Effects to each of you singly, and to all of you jointly, as a Church, both in this World and for ever in the next, *Amen.* So I heartily wish it may be, and humbly trust it will be.

RECOLLECTIONS.

With what affectionate Love and Joy do the Ministers of Christ think of the Saints, as Brethren, whose Names are inrolled in the Book of Life, and who shew benevolent Regards to themselves, as Occasions require! How grateful are they in their Acknowledgments of the Kindness of their Christian-Friends, not from a selfish Temper, but from a Desire that they may bring forth spiritual Fruits of Faith and Love, which shall turn to their own best Account! And how earnestly concern'd are they for the Establishment of Christians in the Faith and Fellowship of the Gospel; for their continual Comfort in the Profession of it; and for their Union in Heart, Design and Labour to help forward the Work of the Lord! And O how patient towards Enemies, and how weaned from this World, should they be, in View and Hope, that the Lord Jesus will soon put an End to all their Troubles, and set every thing to rights in the Day of Judgment! They neither need, nor ought to be anxiously solicitous about any of the Affairs of this Life; but should commit all their Concerns by Faith in Prayer to God, with Thanksgivings for his many Mercies to them; and, in this Way, the most excellent Peace, which God himself will give them through Jesus Christ, and which inexpressibly surpasses all others, and all adequate Conceptions, will compose, fortify and guard their Hearts against all Tribulations and Fears. But O how concerned should they be to cultivate and abound in every thing, that is decent and becoming, just and equitable, pure and holy, amiable and excellent in itself; yea, and in whatsoever is justly deemed a Reputation to the Christian-Character among all Sorts of Men! If we are enabled to practise these Things, as they have been exemplified in the great Apostle, we may

* I have consider'd these *Brethren* as meant, not of private Christians, but of *Ministers*, to distinguish them from all the *Saints*, whose Salutations are sent in the next Verse; (and see the Note on *Col.* iv. 12.)

depend upon it, that God will delight to dwell with us, and manifest himself to us, as our reconciled God and Father. And O what a high Attainment in Christianity is it, when we have learned how to behave, as becomes us, in Prosperity and Adversity, in Fulness and in Want; and to be thoroughly contented in every trying Circumstance of Life! And yet, great as this Attainment is, every true Believer may come up to it, through Christ's Strengthnings, as well as the Apostle himself: And when they are brought to this, they, tho' grateful to their Benefactors like him, think they have enough, and abound, in all that is good for them, and are full of sweet Contentment in their own Souls; and they are satisfied that their God will supply all their real Wants, for Time and Eternity, according to his Riches in Glory by Christ Jesus. And O how abundant must that Supply be, which is answerable to his infinite inexhaustible Riches, in giving like a God! How cordially should Christian-Salutations pass between the Saints in Christ Jesus, in their conversing together, and writing to one another! How affectionately should they wish and pray, that the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ may be with all of this Character! And how chearfully unite in ascribing Glory to God, their Heavenly Father, for ever and ever! *Amen.* So let it be, and so it will be with all that sincerely love him.

A PRAC-

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF THE APOSTLE *PAUL's* EPISTLE to the *COLOSSIANS*.

In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The Preface to the EPISTLE to the *COLOSSIANS*.

COLOSSE was a great and populous City of *Phrygia*; and this Epistle is generally thought to have been wrote by the Apostle *Paul* to the Church there, during his first Imprisonment at *Rome*, about the same Time with those that were sent to the *Ephesians* and *Philippians*. Hence many of the Sentiments and Expressions, in all these Epistles, are much of the same Strain, the Occasions being much alike; and the Apostle's Mind and Heart being then full of those Thoughts, which he took Pleasure in communicating to the Churches; and so they cast a Light one upon the others: Only there seems to be this Difference between the Churches at *Ephesus* and *Philippi*, and this at *Colosse*, that the Apostle had been personally among them, and not among the *Colossians*; for, in this Epistle, he mentions *only* his having *heard of their Faith in Christ Jesus*, and *of the Love which they had to all the Saints*; (Chap. i. 4.) and speaks of *the great Conflict he had for them, and for those at* Laodicea, *and as many as had not seen his Face in the Flesh*; (Chap. ii. 1) which, by the most natural Construction of the Sentence, includes those of *Colosse*, as Persons that had never seen him; and he takes Notice of *Epaphras*, as a *dear Fellow-Servant, who was for them a faithful Minister of Christ, from whom they had learned* the Doctrine of *the Grace of God in Truth*, (Chap. i. 6, 7) and who *was one of themselves*. (Chap. iv. 12.) From hence some conclude, that *Epaphras* was the first that planted the Gospel, and gathered the Church at *Colosse:* But it is uncertain, whether it were he, or any other Minister. However, as they were, I think, mostly a *Gentile*-Church, and the Apostle was made a Minister, in a special Manner, to the *Gentiles*, according to the Dispensation of God, which was given to him, (*Chap.* i. 25—27) his principal View was to establish these *Colossians* in the Faith of the Gospel, against the

Attempts of Judaizing Teachers to bring them into a Subjection to the Law of *Moses*, as necessary for Salvation.

He accordingly begins the Epistle with his usual Salutation, and Thanksgiving to God for what he had heard of their Faith, Love and Hope, and prays for their practical Proficiency in the Knowledge of Christ, of whom, and of whose Grace to them, he gives the most exalted Ideas, to engage their Adherence to him, according to the Gospel; (*Chap*. i.) Then proceeds to discover his great Concern for their further Establishment in Christ, and for their being guarded against those Errors of Philosophy and Judaism, that interfered with their Relation to, and Benefit by him. (*Chap*. ii.) And on Supposition that, according to their Profession, they were really risen with Christ, he exhorts them to Heavenly Mindedness, Mortification of Sin, Christian-Love, Humility, and several relative Duties, together with Prayer and Circumspection; and sends an Account of the State of his own Affairs at *Rome* by *Tychicus* and *Onesimus*, with Salutations from several, of whom he gives high Encomiums; and concludes with an Order for this Epistle to be read by them, and by the Church of *Laodicea*, and for giving a Charge to *Archippus* to take heed to his Ministry; and with his ordinary Benediction. (*Chaps* iii. iv.)

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

The Apostle Paul *salutes the* Colossians, *ver.* 1, 2. *Blesses God for their Faith, Love and Hope, which* Epaphras *had reported to him,* 3—8. *Prays for their Fruitfulness in spiritual Knowledge,* 9—13. *Gives a magnificent View of Christ, and of his Grace to them, to engage their Adherence to him,* 14—23. *And sets out his own Character, as the Apostle of the* Gentiles, 24—29.

TEXT.

1 P*AUL an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the Will of God, and Timotheus our Brother,*

PARAPHRASE.

1. P*AUL*, who is an Apostle of Jesus Christ to bear a special Witness to him, as having seen him since his Resurrection from the Dead, and Ascension to Heaven; (1 *Cor.* xv. 8. See the Note there) and who has not taken this Office upon himself of his own Head, nor was put into it by the Authority of Men; but was immediately called by Christ himself to fulfil it among the *Gentiles*, (ver. 25—27) not according to his own Deserts, but according to the free Purpose, Commandment and Pleasure of God the Father, * sends greeting: And the beloved *Timothy*, a faithful Brother in the Ministry, concurs in all that is hereafter written.

2 *To the Saints and faithful Brethren in Christ, which are at Colosse. Grace* be *unto you, and Peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

2. We heartily join in Christian-Salutations to all the professing Saints, whom we, in the Judgment of Charity, account to be holy Persons, and whom we consider as sincere Brethren in Union with Christ, and faithful Believers in him: We particularly mean all of these excellent Characters, that reside at the great City of *Colosse* in the Province of *Phrygia*, and that ordinarily assemble for religious Worship there. Our Heart's Desire and Prayer for you is, that the divine Favour, and all Manner of Prosperity, as its Fruits and Effects, may abound toward you from God, our common Father, the original Fountain of all Blessings; and from our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who has purchased all good Things, that they might be freely given to you, in full Consistence with the Rights of divine Justice; and who, in Concurrence with the Father, authoritatively and effectually confers them upon you.

3 *We give Thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Je-*

3. We most affectionately unite in Thanksgiving and Praise to God on your Behalf, whom we address, for the Encouragement of our Faith, as the Father of our Lord

* The Apostle asserts his being put into Office, by the Will of God the Father, the more effectually to obviate the Objections of the false Apostles against it; and he joins *Timothy* with himself, not to add to his own Authority, but to strengthen *Timothy*'s among the *Colossians*; and he here, with great Modesty and Prudence, calls him *his Brother*, rather than *his Son*, that he might the better raise their Regards to him. (Vid. *Zanchy* in loc. and the Note on 1 *Cor.* i. 1.)

Jesus

sus Christ, praying always for you.

Jesus Christ, the great and only Mediator; and so, as our reconciled God and Father through him: And we, on all Occasions, present our Supplications, together with our Thanksgivings, to him for you in every Prayer. (*Phil.* i. 4.)

4 *Since we heard of your Faith in Christ Jesus, and of the Love* which ye have *to all the Saints*;

4. This we have done ever since we received an Account of your cordially accepting of, and trusting in Christ alone for all Salvation; and were informed of the genuine Fruits of your Faith, as manifested in the brotherly Affection, which ye have discovered various Ways towards all the Professors of his Name, that bear his holy Image, and so prove themselves to be sanctified by his Spirit.

5 *For the Hope which is laid up for you in Heaven, whereof ye heard before in the Word of the Truth of the Gospel*;

5. Our Prayers and Praises are thus engaged for you *, as your own Faith and Love also are to Christ and all the Saints, in Consideration of the perfect Blessedness, which ye justly hope for through him, and is laid up and hid with him in God (*Chap.* iii. 3) as a rich Treasure uses to be by a Father for his Children, and is reserved and secured in Heaven for you; which heavenly Happiness ye heard of, before now, when *the Gospel of your Salvation*, (Ephes. i. 13) that true and faithful Word of God, was first preached unto you.

6 *Which is come unto you, as* it is *in all the World*; *and bringeth forth Fruit, as* it doth *also in you, since the Day ye heard* of it, *and knew the Grace of God in Truth.*

6. Which Gospel, in the Publication of it, has by the good Providence of God been carried to you, without your seeking after it, as it has been to the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, all over the *Roman* Empire, according to Christ's Commission; (*Mark* xvi. 15) and, by the attending Power of the Spirit, is an effectual Means of making Converts among them, and of their bringing forth the best of Fruit, even Faith, Love and Obedience in them; as it likewise evidently doth in you, ever since ye were favoured with Opportunities of hearing it, and were experimentally acquainted with a real Work of divine Grace in your own Souls, and were led into the Knowledge of the Doctrine of the Grace of God, and embraced it with a sincere Faith, as the Truth is in Jesus.

7 *As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear Fellow-servant, who is for you a faithful Minister of Christ*;

7. According to what ye also (καθὼς καὶ) were instructed in, particularly by your worthy Minister, *Epaphras*, whom we own and esteem, as a dear Brother and faithful Labourer in the Gospel, Cause and Kingdom of Christ, for his Glory and the Good of immortal Souls; and who is in a special Manner a faithful Servant of the Lord Jesus, that seeks not yours, but you; and lays himself out, with conscientious Care and Diligence, for your spiritual Benefit. (See the Note on *Phil.* ii. 25.)

8 *Who also declared unto us your Love in the Spirit.*

8. And who, to testify his great Affection to you, has taken an Opportunity of acquainting us with your hearty Love to Christ, to us, and to all the Saints, which the holy

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* *For the Hope which is laid up for you in Heaven* may denote, either the Reason of the Apostle's Prayer and Thanksgiving for them, or of their Faith in Christ, and Love to all the Saints; and therefore both Senses are taken into the Paraphrase.

Spirit has wrought in you, and drawn forth in a spiritual Manner, and on spiritual Accounts, by means of the Gospel.

9 *For this Cause we also, since the Day we heard* it, *do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the Knowledge of his Will, in all Wisdom and spiritual Understanding;*

9. In Reflection therefore on the pleasing Report, that *Epaphras* has given of your Faith and Love, we have ever since been excited to bear you continually upon our Hearts, in every solemn Prayer; and, in a special Manner, to beg of God for you, that ye may be yet more and more enlarged in, till your whole Hearts are filled with, the Knowledge of his Mind and Will, relating to the Way of Salvation by Jesus Christ, and to your own Comfort and Duty, as interested therein; that ye may abound exceedingly in a judicious, experimental and practical Acquaintance with his manifold Wisdom, which conducts his Will; and in all spiritual Discerning of spiritual Things, as to their Truth, Excellence and Importance, and as to the good and holy Use, which ye ought to make of them.

10 *That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all Pleasing, being fruitful in every good Work, and increasing in the Knowledge of God;*

10. That in the whole of your Walk before God, according to his Ordinances and Commandments, and in all your Conversation in the World, ye may continually behave, as *becomes the Gospel of Christ*, (Phil. i. 27) and act up to the Dignity of your Relation to, and Profession of him, and to the rich Benefits ye have, and hope for from him; and every Way agreeable to his holy Nature and Will, and acceptable in all Things to him, by bringing forth every Fruit of Righteousness, like Plants of the Lord's Right Hand planting, that he may be glorified, (*Isa.* lxi. 3) and by being still more and more progressive in a transforming Acquaintance and Communion with God, as your heavenly Father and Friend.

11 *Strengthened with all Might, according to his glorious Power, unto all Patience and Long-suffering, with Joyfulness.*

11. We also pray that ye may be abundantly strengthen'd with all needful Aids and Assistances of his Spirit, for performing every Duty and Service, and for sustaining every Trial and Conflict, according to the Working of his mighty Power; which he exerts, like a God, in a glorious Manner toward you, that ye may be enabled to exercise all Patience, in a sweet Composure of Spirit, and Possession of your own Souls in Peace, at all Times, and under all Afflictions, without any Murmuring at the Hand of God, or under the highest Provocations from Men; and may be helped to hold on your Way, and hold out to the End, with a noble Constancy and Fortitude of Soul, in submitting unto the Will of God, and bearing Injuries; and in doing all this with holy Joy and Triumph, in Consideration of the great Things that God has done for you, of his being continually with you, to support, strengthen and comfort you, and of the Glory that is set before you.

12 *Giving Thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be Partakers of the*

12. This calls for Praise, instead of Complaints, under all your Tribulations; and as ye ought to abound in that delightful Tribute to the God of all your Mercies; so we heartily join in the most grateful Thanksgivings for you, as

Inheritance of the Saints in Light:

as well as for ourselves, to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our Father in him, who hath prepared and formed us for the heavenly State and World, (2 *Cor.* v. 5) by working in us severally all spiritual, holy and heavenly Propensions and Desires after, and Fitness for the glorious Inheritance, which he has graciously appointed and provided for us, and has promised, and will give to us, as the Inheritance of Sons; an Inheritance, which is all Light, Glory and Joy; and which, to allude to the sovereign Manner of his disposing of the Land of *Canaan* to *Israel*, he will give Possession of, as it were by Lot, to all those, and those only, that are sanctified by his Spirit here, and shall be all over covered with the Light of Knowledge, Holiness and Happiness, in his immediate Presence hereafter, where they shall see *Light in his Light.* (Ps. xxxvi. 9.)

13 *Who hath delivered us from the Power of Darkness, and hath translated* us *into the Kingdom of his dear Son:*

13. Who has plucked us that believe, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, as Brands out of the Fire; and rescued us with a mighty Hand, (ἐῤῥύσατο) like *Lot* out of *Sodom*, from the Tyranny and Dominion of Sin, which is Darkness itself, (1 *John* i. 6) and of Satan, (*Acts* xxvi. 18) who is the Prince of Darkness, and had taken us captive at his Will; and this gracious God has wrought a happy Change in our Temper and State, by making us *a willing People in the Day of his Power*, (Ps. cx. 3) and bringing us into the Kingdom of Grace, which is erected by, and is under the Influence and Government of, his eminently beloved Son, even the Son of his most peculiar and highest Love, (τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ) in order to his advancing us to the Kingdom of Glory through him.

14 *In whom we have Redemption thro' his Blood*, even *the Forgiveness of Sins.*

14. In whom we have the best of all Deliverances, by the Price of Redemption, which he paid in shedding his precious Blood, and giving his Life a Ransom for us, even a complete Discharge from the Guilt of Sin, and the Curse of the Law, which includes, and brings after it, a Deliverance from the Power of Sin and Satan, and from the Wrath to come, that Sin had deserved; as also an Inheritance of all spiritual and eternal Blessings, that Sin had forfeited: And we may be well assured of the Efficacy of Christ's atoning Blood for this Purpose, according to the Riches of the Father's Grace, (*Ephes.* i. 7, see the Notes there) from the Dignity of his Person, and the Excellency of his Office.

15 *Who is the Image of the invisible God, the First-born of every Creature:*

15. As to the *Dignity of his Person*, which adds an infinite Value to his Sacrifice, He, in his divine Nature, is the exact Likeness of the Person of God the Father, as *one* in Essence and Perfections with him; and he accordingly, in his Incarnation, and Office-Qualifications and Performances, is the representative Image of his Father, who being a pure Spirit, is absolutely invisible in his own Nature; so that *no Man hath seen or can see him:* (John i, 18.) And this divine Person existed from all Eternity, as having been in a peculiar

peculiar inconceivable Manner begotten * of the Father, before any Creature was brought into Being; and is, inseparably with him, the Former of all Things; and consequently the original Lord and Heir of all, according to the antient Rights of the First-born.

16 For by him were all Things created that are in heaven, and that are in Earth, visible and invisible, whether they be *Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers; all Things were created by him, and for him:*

16. For by him, as the efficient Cause, together with the Father and Spirit, all Things, that are not God, were brought forth out of nothing into Being, (see the Notes on *John* i. 3) even all Creatures, that are in the Heaven of Heavens, and in the starry Heaven and the Air, and that inhabit or belong to the Earth and Sea; all visible and invisible Things whatsoever; all the highest Ranks and Individuals of Angels in Heaven, and of Men upon Earth, whether, for Dignity and Authority in those respective Worlds †, they be stiled *Thrones*, in Allusion to the royal Seats of Princes; or *Dominions*, that have Rule and Government committed to them under any Form whatsoever; or *Principalities*, that are in high and noble Stations; or *Powers*, that are great in any Kind of Authority and Influence: Yea, and all inferior as well as higher Orders of Creatures, down to the smallest Atom, were brought into Being by his creating Power, as their original Cause: And all of them, from the highest to the lowest, were created for him, as their ultimate End; that he, together with the Father and Spirit, might one Way or other be glorified in, and by them, as they are the Works of his Hand, and shall be made subservient to the Designs of his mediatorial Kingdom.

17 And he is before all Things, and by him all Things consist.

17. And this carries an undeniable Demonstration, that he had a prior Existence to all Creatures whatsoever: And as we are said *to live, move and have our Being in God*; (Acts xvii. 28) so all Things do alike subsist, stand, or continue *in him*, (ἐν αὐτῷ) who is omnipresent, all-powerful and active, in his providential Influence over them; as they are continually preserved in Being, and in their regular Frame and Order, and are animated and upheld, by the same *Word of his Power*, (Heb. i. 3) which at first called them

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* The Words, (πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως) render'd *the First-born of every Creature*, signify also *born*, or *begotten before all Creation*: Or (as *Isidore* an antient *Greek* Writer observed) if the *Accent* of the Word (πρωτοτόκος) be placed on the last Syllable but one, instead of the last but two, it signifies not *passively*, the *First Begotten*, but *actively* the *First Begetter*, or Former of all Things; and in Proof of Christ's being so, it is added in the next Words, *For by him were all Things created*; and *ver.* 17 'tis said, not that *he was made*, but that *he is before all Things*. (Vid. *Isid.* Lib. 3. Epist. 31.) In the first Way of understanding this Passage, according to our Translation, it relates to Christ's Office, as Head of the Church: In the second, it relates to what is usually called the Eternal Generation of the Son: In the third, it relates to his being the efficient Cause, or the Creator of all Things; and in all these Views he is consider'd in the following Verses.

† *Thrones, Dominions, Principalities and Powers* are Terms often used to signify the highest Orders of Angels; and, perhaps, may here most immediately design them: But as they are also used to signify the highest Ranks of Men, it still further widens the Argument, and, I think, there can be no Impropriety in it, if we also include them. (See Dr. *Hammond*'s Note here.)

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into Existence, and which he now exerts as Head over all Things to the Church. (*Ephes.* i. 22.)

18 *And he is the Head of the Body, the Church: Who is the Beginning, the First-born from the Dead; that in all Things he might have the Pre-eminence.*

18. And as to the *Excellency of his Office* in human Nature, which he assumed into personal Union with himself, This same great and glorious Person is not only the political Head of Direction, Authority and Government, in like Manner as a King is the Head of the State; but he is also the Head of vital Influence, by his Word and Spirit, to the Church, (which is as intimately united to him, as the natural Body is to its Head) to communicate all spiritual Life, Nourishment, Growth and Activity to all, and every Member of it, the Whole of which Spiritual Body is the relative *Fulness of him, that filleth all in all.* (Eph. i. 22, 23.) He accordingly is the Head and Original, (ἀρχὴ) as of the spiritual Life of their Souls, so of the Resurrection of their Bodies to eternal Life; being himself the first that arose from the Dead to immortal Life, and *that* by his own Power, as the Pledge and Pattern, quickning Cause and First-fruits of the Resurrection of all those that sleep in him: (1 *Cor.* xv. 20; see the Notes there.) And he is thus the Lord of the Dead and the Living, (*Rom.* xiv. 9) that he in all Things might be preferred, exalted and dignified of God, and esteemed by the Church, in his mediatorial Capacity (as he really is in himself) above all Angels, and above all the Saints, whom he condescends to call his Brethren. (*Rom.* viii. 29.)

19, *For it pleased* the Father, *that in him should all Fulness dwell.*

19. For, in the Oeconomy of Salvation, it has seemed good in God the Father's Sight, and he of his own infinitely wise, gracious and holy Pleasure, and in Honour to his Son, and in Love to his People, has ordained, that, correspondent to the Excellency of Christ's divine Person, and the Greatness of his mediatorial Work *, an All-fulness of Gifts and Graces, Merit and Righteousness, Light and Power, should dwell permanently in him, with the utmost Perfection, not for himself only, but likewise to be communicated to every Member of his spiritual Body, that *of his Fulness they all may receive Grace for Grace,* (John i. 16.) and that he may *fill all Things,* and be *all in all,* (Ephes. i. 23. and iv. 10.)

20 *And (having made Peace through*

20. And God the Father (having, through the Redemption purchased by the Blood of Christ, (*v.* 14.) which he

* *This All Fulness,* which dwells in Christ, seems evidently to signify, not the original Fulness of his Deity, but his *mediatorial* dispensatory Fulness, which he received of his Father in his human Nature and Office-Capacity; for his original Fulness is *essentially necessary to him,* and inseparable from him, as *God,* and don't depend upon the *mere Goodwill and Pleasure* of the Father; but the Fulness, here mention'd, is what we are told *it pleased the Father should dwell in him,* and is placed amidst that Part of the Apostle's Description of him, which relates most immediately to his *Office-Character;* and the Expressions, used *Chap.* ii. 9, to signify the Inhabitation of the Deity in the Man *Jesus,* is much stronger, and without any Hint of *Will and Pleasure,* as the Cause of it, where it's said, in him *dwelleth all the Fulness of the Godhead bodily.* (See the Note there.)

the Blood of his Cross) by him to reconcile all Things unto himself, by him, I say, *whether* they be *Things in Earth or Things in Heaven,*

shed in his painful, shameful and accursed Death of the Cross, removed the Enmity, and made up the Breach, which Sin had caused between him and his Church) it hath pleased him, by this their Head and Mediator, to bring them all into a State of Friendship and Favour with himself †; It has been, I say, the good Pleasure of his Will to reconcile them to himself, by the Peace-making Sacrifice of Christ, that the righteous Demands of his broken Law and offended Justice might not be executed upon them; but that he might honourably act toward them in a Way of Kindness and Friendship, according to the Riches of his Love and Grace; whether they be Believers among *Jews* or *Gentiles* on Earth, or glorified Saints, that in the Virtue of his Blood already are, or ever shall be in Heaven.

21 *And you, that were sometime aliena-*

21, 22. And, in Consequence of this, ye, who heretofore, in the Days of your Unregeneracy, were estranged from the

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† *God's reconciling all Things to himself whether in Earth, or in Heaven,* don't, I apprehend, include the holy Angels, who, having never sinned, can't be said to be *reconciled to God*; but relates only to all the Saints, whether on Earth, or in Heaven, who needed to be reconciled after the Breach, that Sin had made between God and them.——When the Scripture speaks of Reconciliation *by Christ*, or *by his Cross, Blood,* or *Death*, it is commonly expressed by *God's reconciling us to himself,* and not by *his being reconciled to us*; the Reason of which seems to be, because God is the *offended* Party, and we are the *Offenders*, who, as such, have Need to be reconciled to him; and the Price of Reconciliation, by the Blood of Christ, is paid to him, and not to us. *Grotius* observes, that in Heathen Authors, *Men's being reconciled to their Gods,* is always understood to signify appeasing the Anger of their Gods. Condemned Rebels may be said to be reconciled to their Sovereign, when he, on one Consideration or another, pardons them; though, perhaps, they still remain Rebels in their Hearts against him: And when our Lord ordered the OFFENDING *to go and be reconciled to his* OFFENDED *Brother*, (Math, v. 23, 24.) The plain Meaning is, that he should go, and try to appease his Anger, obtain his Forgiveness, and regain his Favour and Friendship, by humbling himself to him, asking his Pardon, or satisfying him for any Injury that he might have done him. In like Manner, *God's reconciling us to himself* by the Cross of Christ, don't signify, as the *Socinians* contend, our being reconciled, by *Conversion*, to a religious Turn in our Hearts to God: But it is a Reconciliation that results from God's graciously providing and accepting an Atonement for us, that he might not inflict the Punishment upon us, which we deserved, and the Law condemned us to; but might be at Peace with us, and receive us into Favour, on Christ's Account: For this Reconciliation, by the *Cross of Christ*, is in a Way of Atonement or Satisfaction to divine Justice for Sin; and, with Respect hereunto, we are said to be *reconciled to God by the Death of his Son, while we were Enemies,* which is of much the same Import *with Christ's dying for the Ungodly,* and *while we were yet Sinners*: (Rom. v. 6, 8, 10.) And *our being reconciled to God,* by approving and accepting of his Method of Reconciliation by Jesus Christ, and, on that Encouragement, turning to him, is distinguished from *his reconciling us to himself, and not imputing our Trespasses to us,* on Account of *Christ's having been made Sin for us, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him,* (2 Cor. v. 18---21.) This is called Christ's *making Reconciliation for Iniquity,* and *making Reconciliation for the Sins of the People,* (Dan. ix. 24. and Heb. ii. 17.) and answers to the ceremonial and typical Reconciliation, which was made by the Blood of the Sacrifices under the Law, *to make Atonement and Reconciliation for* Israel; (2 *Cor.* xxix. 24, and *Ezek.* xlv. 15, 17.) and which was frequently stiled, *making Atonement for Sin,* and *an Atonement for their Souls.* Now as all the legal Sacrifices of Atonement, and the truly expiatory Sacrifice of Christ, were offered, not to the *Offenders*, but to *God*, to reconcile him to them; What can *Reconciliation* by the *Death, Blood,* or *Cross of Christ*, mean, but that the Law and Justice of God were thereby satisfied and all Obstructions, on his Part, to Peace and Friendship toward Sinners are removed, that he might not pursue his righteous Demands upon them, according to the holy Resentments of his Nature and Will, and the Threatnings of his Law, for their Sins; but might mercifully forgive them, and take them into a State of Favour with himself, upon their *receiving the Atonement*, or (καταλλαγὴν) *Reconciliation*, (Rom. v. 11) by Faith, after the Offence that Sin had given him, and the Breach it had made upon the original Friendship between him and them? (Vid. *Grot.* de Satisf. Cap. vii. and Dr. *Owen's* Answer to *Biddle's* Catechism, &c. Chap. xxix.)

ted, and Enemies in your *Mind by wicked Works, yet now hath he reconciled.*

Life of God, and, through the perverſe Reaſonings of your own corrupt Minds, were full of Enmity to him, and diſcovered yourſelves to be, and actually became more and more ſo, by an habitual Courſe of wicked Practices, in Contradiction to him, and to his holy Law; (*Rom.* viii. 7.)

22 *In the Body of his Fleſh thro' Death, to preſent you holy and unblameable, and unreproveable in his Sight:*

he has now, upon your believing in Chriſt, brought into a State of Reconciliation, Peace and Friendſhip with himſelf, by the human Body of Chriſt, which conſiſted of Fleſh and Blood, like the Bodies of other Men, even thro' the Merit and Efficacy of his atoning Death, who his *own ſelf bore your Sins in his own Body on the Tree,* (1 Pet. ii. 24.) that he might preſent you to himſelf, or make you ſtand before him, as pure and holy Members of his Church, without Spot or Blemiſh, (*Epheſ.* v. 27.) and that nothing may be found to bring you under Condemnation, or Reproof in his Sight, as the great Judge of all, or in the Sight of God, at the laſt Day.

23 *If ye continue in the Faith grounded and ſettled, and be not moved away from the Hope of the Goſpel, which ye have heard,* and *which was preached to every Creature which is under Heaven; whereof I Paul am made a Miniſter.*

23. This, I am well ſatisfied, will be the happy Event, as to you §, ſince ye have given evident Proof of your being ſincere Believers, by your ſtedfaſtly perſevering in the Faith of Chriſt, as Perſons that are built on him, as your Foundation, and are firmly eſtabliſhed in your Dependence alone on him; and ſo maintain your Ground againſt all the artful and violent Attempts of your Enemies to ſhake, and carry you off from Chriſt, the Object of your Hope, and from your Hope in him, as ſet before you in the Goſpel, which ye have heard, attended to and received, and which, according to the true Intent of our Lord's Commiſſion, (*Mark* xvi. 15.) has been preached promiſcuouſly to *Gentiles* as well as *Jews,* under what Quarter of the Heavens ſoever they dwell; (See the Note on *v.* 28) and I, *Paul,* am highly favoured with his ſpecial Commiſſion to communicate this Goſpel particularly to the *Gentiles,* (Acts xxvi. 16, 17, 18.)

24 *Who now rejoice in my Sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the Afflictions of Chriſt in my Fleſh, for his Body's Sake,*

24. And ſeeing ye continue in the Faith grounded and ſettled, (*v.* 23.) I now, inſtead of repining at the ſevere Perſecutions and preſent Impriſonments, that have befallen me for your Sakes, on Account of my preaching the Goſpel to *Gentile*-ſinners, (*Epheſ.* iii. 1.) do, on the contrary, even rejoice in them, and count them my Honour, (*Acts* v. 41.) as they alſo are your Glory; (*Epheſ.* iii. 13.) and in-

§ *If ye continue* might be, more agreeable to the Apoſtle's Deſign, rendered *ſince ye continue*; for the Particle (ειγε) often ſignifies *ſince,* as in 2 *Cor.* v. iii. (ſee the Note there,) and *ye continue* (επιμενετε) is not in the future, *but preſent Tenſe,* intimating what they did *at preſent,* or *hitherto*; and, (as Mr. *Pierce* obſerves in his Note here) this Senſe *is neceſſary,* becauſe of the *now* (νυν) in the next Verſe, and becauſe the Apoſtle ſpeaks of his *joying and beholding their Stedfaſtneſs in the Faith of Chriſt.* (Chap. ii. 5) And ſo no Argument can be drawn from hence againſt the Perſeverance of the Saints; or for making their continuing in the Faith the Cauſe of their being preſented unreproveable at the great Day.

ſtead

which is the Church:

ſtead of perſecuting others, as formerly *, I, in my Turn, now chearfully undergo all Manner of Tribulations, which ſtill remain for filling up the Meaſure of my Sufferings for Chriſt's Glory, as he filled up the Meaſure of his Sufferings for my Redemption; and which I am further to endure in my natural Body, after his Example, and in his Cauſe, who counts them his own, and has appointed them to me for the Benefit of his myſtical Body, by which I mean his Church, that they may be confirmed in the Faith of the Goſpel, and encouraged to bear, with undaunted Bravery, whatever Sufferings they may be called to undergo for it, by ſeeing how I am enabled to behave with holy Fortitude, Patience and Joy under mine.

25 *Whereof I am made a Miniſter according to the Diſpenſation of God, which is given to me for you, to fulfil the Word of God;*

25. Of which Church (ἧς) I am, by his immediate Authority, conſtituted a Miniſter in my apoſtolic Office, according to the infinitely gracious and holy (οικονομιαν) Order of God's ſettling in his Family, for diſpenſing the Goſpel, which is committed to me, as a ſacred Truſt, with a ſpecial Regard to you as *Gentiles*, (Epheſ. iii. 1, 2. and 1 Tim. i. 11, 12.) for your Converſion, Edification and Salvation, to fulfil his prophetic Word about his calling the *Gentiles*, (Iſai. xi. 10. and xlii. 1. Zech. ii. 11. and Mal. i. 11.)

26 Even *the Myſtery which hath been hid from Ages, and from Generations, but now is made manifeſt to his Saints:*

26. Which is indeed a Myſtery, both as it contains the unſearchable Riches of Chriſt, (*Epheſ.* iii. 8.†) and as it has been ſo far concealed, eſpecially in its brighteſt Glories, from Ages and Generations under the Law, that the *Gentiles* knew nothing of it, and the *Jews* did not fully underſtand the Notices, that were given of it under former Diſpenſations; but which is now as clearly revealed, as the Na-

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* *Fill up* (ανλαναπληρω) ſays *Le Clerk*, and Mr. *Pierce* after him, in a beautiful Criticiſm on the Place, ſignifies *fill up by Turns*, to intimate, that the Apoſtle now ſuffered in his Turn, as he had formerly made others ſuffer for Chriſt in theirs: And I am apt to think that, in calling theſe the *Afflictions of Chriſt*, he might recollect Chriſt's ſaying to him, in the Career of his Perſecutions, *Saul, Saul, Why perſecuteſt thou me?* (Acts ix. 4.) Or, according to the above-given Senſe of the Word tranſlated *fill up*, he might mean that, as Chriſt had ſuffer'd for his Redemption, he now in his Turn ſuffer'd for Chriſt's Glory, and in Conformity to him, as *Sufferings for Chriſt* are manifeſtly to be underſtood in 2 *Cor.* i. 5, and 1 *Pet.* iv. 13: But I don't find, on the ſtricteſt Search, that Chriſt's own Sufferings are any where called, as here, his *Afflictions*, (θλιψεων τȣ Χριςȣ) while this Word is commonly uſed, through the New Teſtament, to expreſs the Sufferings of the Apoſtles and other Chriſtians for Chriſt's Sake; nor can any of their Sufferings be ſuppoſed to be added to his, or to concur with his, for the Satisfaction of divine Juſtice, without overthrowing the Perfection of his atoning Sacrifice, who, *by one Offering, perfected for ever them that are ſanctified.* (Heb. x. 14.)

† *Myſtery* here, as in ſeveral other Places, relates to the calling of the *Gentiles*, which was before, at leaſt comparatively ſpeaking, a Myſtery, but is now moſt clearly revealed: And yet as there were many plain and expreſs Prophecies of this under the Old Teſtament, a vaſt Collection of which is made, and compared with correſpondent New Teſtament-Texts, by the learned *Huet*, in his *Demonſtratio Evangelica*, (Vid. Prop. 9. Cap. 158. p. 589—597) It can't be ſaid not to have been revealed before, though, through miſtaken Prejudices, it was not generally underſtood in its true Senſe and Meaning: And therefore its being called a *Myſtery* ſeems, not only to carry the Idea of its having lain under great Obſcurity before; (which I apprehend is to be conſider'd with reference to the Doctrines of the Goſpel itſelf, as well as to its being preached to the *Gentiles*) but alſo of the unfathomable Depths of Wiſdom and Grace, that are contained in the Goſpel, as now revealed in the plaineſt Manner, that it ever will be in this World, or that our Faculties in this imperfect State are capable of taking in. (See the Note on 1 *Cor.* ii. 7.)

ture of Things admits of, (τοις αγιοις αυτȣ) to his holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit, (*Ephes.* iii. 5) and, through them, to all true Believers, who, by Profession, Obligation and regenerating Grace, are his Saints.

27 To whom God would make known what is the Riches of the Glory of this Mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the Hope of Glory:

27. To whom God, of his own good Pleasure, according to his eternal Purpose, and antient Predictions, would now, under the New Testament-Dispensation, make a plain Discovery of the exceeding Riches of the Glory of this incomprehensibly excellent Gospel, even among the *Gentiles*, which is all summ'd up in Christ, who, as preached among you, and as dwelling in your Hearts by his Spirit and by Faith, is become the Author and Ground of all your Hopes of Eternal Life, as well as is the Purchaser of all its Glory.

28 Whom we preach, warning every Man, and teaching every Man in all Wisdom; that we may present every Man perfect in Christ Jesus:

28. This is the blessed Saviour, whom we, as Messengers of the best Tidings that ever were brought to the Sons of Men, declare, and make the grand Subject of our Ministry, in his glorious Person and Offices, in the whole Compass of his Mediation, and in the believing, affectionate and obediential Regards, that are due to him, and to God the Father through him; admonishing all Sorts of Persons to reflect upon their sinful and obnoxious State by Nature, and to take heed of rejecting him *; and instructing them, without Distinction of Nations, wheresoever we come, according to the Wisdom that God hath given us; and leading them into the Knowledge of the manifold Wisdom of God, as display'd in the Gospel-Revelation, to make them wise to Salvation; that we may be the Means and Instruments of presenting them all to God, as true and uncorrupted Believers, that are espoused to Christ, (2 *Cor.* xi. 2) and well acquainted with the whole Scheme of the Gospel, and that have, not only a Perfection of Parts, which belong to the new Creature, but an eminent Growth of them; and are already perfect in their Head Christ, (see the Note on 1 *Cor.* ii. 6) and shall be perfected in all Knowledge and Grace, Holiness and Happiness, through him, in the heavenly State.

29 Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his Working, which worketh in me mightily.

29. To the Accomplishment of this, I also labour with Pains and Diligence in Prayer and Preaching, laying myself out to the utmost by all Means, amidst all Difficulties, and in the Face of all Opposition, like the vehement Contenders in the *Grecian* Games, (αγωνιζομενος) according to the Energy of his Spirit and Grace, which works with mighty Power in me, to enable me for it, and with me, to crown my Labours with glorious Success. (See the Note on 1 *Cor.* xv. 10.)

* *Every Man*, as mentioned three times over in this Verse, *and every Creature which is under Heaven*, ver. 23, can't be supposed to mean all the Individuals of Mankind; but evidently signifies (according to the Drift of the Apostle's Argument, and the frequent Use of these universal Terms in the New Testament) *Jews* and *Gentiles*, to whom he preached Christ and the Gospel, that he might present them perfect in him, without Distinction of Nations, or Preference of one Sort of them to another.

Recollections.

What a divine Authority does the apostolic Character give to *Paul's* Epistles! And with what Affection should we, after his Example, wish all Aboundings of Grace and Peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, to all the Saints and Faithful in Christ Jesus! And how should we bless God on their Behalf, and recommend them in our Prayers to him, on account of what we see or hear of their Faith and Love, and of their well-grounded Hope of that Eternal Life, which is reserved in Heaven for them, according to the Truth of the Gospel! What a Mercy is it, that this Gospel is now preached, by divine Commission, to *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, in all its unsearchably glorious Riches, which was a Mystery concealed in great Measure from former Ages; but is now, as far as the Nature of Things admits, clearly manifested to the Saints! But how much greater is the Mercy still, to know this Gospel of the Grace of God in Truth; to experience its Efficacy, in delivering us from the Power of Satan, and translating us into the Kingdom of God's best beloved Son; and to have Christ dwelling in our Hearts, as our Hope of Glory! This encourages further Prayers for all Increase in Light, and Grace, and Strengthenings, by the glorious Operations of divine Power, unto all Patience, Long-suffering and Joy, under all the Trials of this Life; and unto all becoming, fruitful and holy walking with God, who in this way will make us meet for the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. How great and glorious is the Person of Christ! He is the essential and representative Image of God the Father, who in his own Nature is invisible; he had an eternal Existence before all Worlds, and is the Creator and Upholder, the first Cause and last End, of all Things, from the highest to the lowest of them, in Heaven and Earth; he also, as Mediator, is the Head of his mystical Body, the Church; has all office and dispensatory Fulness constantly residing in him; and is the First and Chief that rose from the Dead to Immortal Life, and every way super-eminent to all Saints and Angels. And how important are the Benefits, that his Church receive from him! They that were sometimes Enemies, through the Iniquity of their Hearts and Lives, are now reconciled to God by his atoning Death, and have Remission of Sins through his redeeming Blood; and they are kept stedfast in the Faith and Hope of the Gospel, till at length they shall be presented faultless, and without Rebuke, in the Sight of God. And what an Honour is it to be made wise and faithful Preachers of Christ, and Instruments of presenting Multitudes perfect in him! Who would not willingly lay themselves out to the utmost, according to the powerful Workings of his Grace in, and with them, to subserve this blessed Design; and rather rejoice than repine at any Sufferings, to what Degree soever they mey be called to undergo them in the Cause of Christ, for his Sake, and for the Conversion, Edification and Eternal Salvation of many Souls!

CHAP. II.

The Apostle expresses his Love to, and Joy in Believers, whom he had never seen, and encourages their continuing to walk in Christ, 1—7. *Cautions them against the Errors of Heathen-Philosophy, against the Vanity of* Jewish *Traditions, and against an Observance of* Mosaic *Rites, which had been completely fulfilled in Christ, beyond what they could hope to find elsewhere,* 8—17. *Against worshipping of Angels, as that were, in Effect, renouncing their Head, Christ,* 18, 19. *And against legal Ordinances and human Institutions, that are of no Advantage for spiritual Purposes,* 20—23.

TEXT.

1 FOR *I would that ye knew what great Conflict I have for you, and* for *them at Laodicea, and* for *as many as have not seen my Face in the Flesh;*

PARAPHRASE.

1. IT is with a particular Reference to you, that I speak of my earnest Endeavour to present every Man perfect in Christ Jesus. (*Chap.* i. 28, 29.) For I would fain make you sensible of my great Solicitude, Concern and fervent Prayers for you, (*Chap.* i. 9) the Believers at *Colosse*, and for those of your neighbouring City of *Laodicea*; and even for all, that have received the Faith of Christ, wherever they reside, tho' they, like you, have never had the Opportunity of seeing me in the Body, nor consequently of attending on my Ministry, and being wrought upon by it.

2 *That their Hearts might be comforted, being knit together in Love, and unto all Riches of the full Assurance of Understanding, to the Acknowledgment of the Mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;*

2. I wrestle with God in Prayer for all such, that their Hearts may be abundantly filled with divine Consolation, as Believers that are closely and firmly cemented together in the Bonds of the most cordial Affection to Christ and one another; and are throughly united in Endeavours for attaining a distinct, clear and complete Acquaintance with the excellent Scheme of the Gospel, in all its Riches of spiritual and eternal Blessings, unto the intire Satisfaction of their own Souls; and unto the most honourable, steady and public Profession of these deep Things of God, which, though now revealed for the Salvation of the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, continue to be *unsearchable Riches*, (*Eph.* iii. 8) that were from all Eternity design'd, and prepared in the gracious Counsels of God the Father's Will, (*Ephes.* i. 11) and are purchased, revealed and dispensed by our Lord Jesus Christ, as the great Mediator between God and them.

3 *In whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge.*

3. In whom *, as the Head of the Church, are contain'd, for their Use and Benefit, beyond their Comprehension, and with a Concealment from carnal Minds, all the rich and inexhaustible Treasures of perfect Wisdom and Knowledge, for managing all the Affairs of his Kingdom of Providence and Grace, and seasonably supplying all our Wants; and for revealing the whole Will of God about our Salvation; as also for inlightning our Minds, and directing us in our Way and Walk through all the Darkness and Dangers of this Life, and conducting us safe to heavenly Glory.

4 *And this I say, lest any Man should beguile you with enticing Words.*

4. And I thus speak of all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, that are laid up in Christ, from the deep Concern of my Heart for you, that ye may be established in him; lest, *as the Serpent beguiled* Eve *through his Subtilty*,

* *In whom* (ἐν ᾧ) may be render'd *in which*, and refer to the *Mystery*, as well as to *Christ*: and so signifies that all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, relating to Salvation, are wrapp'd up, and contained in *this Mystery*: But I rather take it to be meant of *Christ*, who is the nearest Antecedent, and is spoken of *ver.* 9, 10 as having *all the Fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him, in whom* the Church is complete. (See also Dr. *Whitby*'s Note here.) And *hid in him* intimates, (says Bishop *Davenant* on the Place) that these Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge are so hid, as not to be discerned by carnal Men, but only by those, to whom God hath given spiritual Eyes to see them.

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(2 *Cor.* xi. 3) so, through the plausible Insinuations of Judaizing Teachers, who by false Reasonings, *flattering Words* and *fair Speeches; lie in wait to deceive*, (1 Cor. xvi. 18, and Ephes. iv. 14) any one should delude you into insnaring Notions, that are contrary to, or derogatory from Christ and his Glory, and would turn you off from him, and from the pure Doctrine of Salvation alone through him: My Knowledge of your Affairs, and Affection to you, engage this solicitous Care of my Soul about you.

5 For though I be absent in the Flesh, yet am I with you in the Spirit, joying and beholding your Order, and the Stedfastness of your Faith in Christ.

5. For tho' I be corporally distant from you, and never saw you; yet my Heart is with you, in delightful Reflections on what I have heard of your Faith, Love and Hope; (*Chap.* i. 4, 5) and I clearly perceive, by Suggestions of the Spirit, how Things are with you, (see the Note on 1 *Cor.* v. 3) as to your rich Attainments, on one Hand, and Trials of various Kinds, on the other; and I am filled with sacred Joy from what I know of your Circumstances, as if I were personally present with you, particularly with respect to the good Discipline, that is kept up among you, as a Church of Christ, and the orderly Behaviour of its several Members; and with respect to the firm, solid and steady Adherence of your Faith to the Person, Mediation and Doctrines of Christ, notwithstanding all the Artifices, that are used to corrupt your Minds, and draw you off from him.

6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so *walk ye in him;*

6. As therefore ye have received Christ by Faith in his Person and Offices, as your Prophet to teach you, as your Priest to make Atonement and intercede for you, and as your King to rule and govern you, even as your complete Lord and Saviour; so I intreat and exhort you still to cleave with Purpose of Heart to him, and to walk in a daily Exercise of Faith in him, and in a constant Observation of all his Ordinances and Commandments; yea, in all holy Conversation and Godliness, as becomes your Profession of him, and Relation to him, by virtue of your Union with him, and by Derivation of Grace from him;

7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the Faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with Thanksgiving.

7. As sincere Believers, who, like a Tree planted in a good Soil, are rooted in Christ, fastning on him, to keep you fix'd and immoveable by any Wind of Doctrine, and drawing Nourishment from him for your spiritual Growth in him; (*Ephes.* iv. 14, 15) and who, like a House erected on a solid Foundation, are built upon Christ, and closely united to him, as the only Foundation of your Faith and Hope, Security and Salvation, (1 *Cor.* iii. 11) that ye *may grow unto an holy Temple in the Lord, in whom ye are built together for an Habitation of God, thro' the Spirit*; (Eph. ii. 21, 22) and that ye may be confirmed both in the Doctrine and Grace of Faith in him, according to what ye have heard, and received by the Ministry of *Epaphras*, our dear Fellow-servant; (*Chap.* i. 7) and may abound exceedingly in daily Increases of Light and Faith, and every other Grace, with

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inlarged Thankfulness and Praise to the Author and Finisher of all that concerns you.

8 Beware lest any Man spoil you thro' Philosophy and vain Deceit, after the Tradition of Men, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after Christ.

8. Take heed lest any Seducer make a Prey of you, and draw you off from Christ and his pure Gospel; and rob you of its Privileges and Blessings, through the Subtilties and Corruptions of the false Philosophy of the Heathens, which *Jewish* Doctors have adopted into their Religion; and through their fallacious Pretences, which are all empty, delusive and vain, as they puff up the Mind with a Conceit of Things, that have nothing in them; and mislead it to follow the uncertain Traditions, that were the Inventions of Men in former Ages, and have been handed down from one Generation to another to this very Day; and also to observe such ceremonial Rites of the *Mosaic* Law, as were the Principles, or first Elements (στοιχεια) of the Church in its Infant-state, and were in themselves of a carnal Nature, as suited to impress little Children by worldly Appearances: (See the Paraphrase on *Gal.* iv. 3.) And none of those Things are according to the Mind and Will of Christ, as revealed in the Gospel; nor do any of them, as now urged and observed, lead the Soul to him alone for Salvation, who has an All-sufficiency for it in himself.

9 For in him dwelleth all the Fulness of the Godhead bodily:

9. For the divine Nature *, with all the Perfections of Deity in their utmost Fulness, reside, and for ever abide, substantially in his incarnate Person, as in the Temple of his Body, inhabited by the in-dwelling Godhead, in a personal, and infinitely more glorious Manner, than it ever dwelt in the *Jewish* Tabernacle, or Temple of old.

10 And ye are complete in him, which is the Head of all Principality and Power.

10. And ye, who have received him by Faith, (*ver.* 6) and so are united to him as Members of his mystical Body, have all Salvation in him as your Head; ye have all Defects made up, and all Securities and Blessings completed, though not already in your own Persons, yet *in him, who*

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* *The Godhead, the Fulness of the Godhead,* and *all the Fulness of the Godhead,* are as strong Expressions, as can well be imagined, to denote that the divine Nature, with not some only, but all its essential Perfections, the very same as are in the Father himself, dwell *substantially* in Christ's human *Body,* as the Word (σωματικως) may signify, either *bodily,* to intimate the personal Union of the divine Nature with the human Body, as well as Soul of our Lord, when he, the eternal Word, *was made Flesh, and dwelt among us*; (John i. 1, 14. see the Note there) or *really* and *substantially,* in Opposition to figuratively and emblematically, in Types and Shadows, in which Sense the Apostle says *the Body is of Christ:* (ver. 17) And this is infinitely more, than any thing that is said of God's *dwelling in* his People, (2 *Cor.* vi. 16) and of their being *filled with all the Fulness of God.* (Ephes. iii. 19.) His *dwelling in them* evidently signifies only his gracious Presence with them, in a Way of special Favour and Relation, Manifestation and Operation; and their being *filled with all the Fulness of God,* (παν το πληρωμα τȣ Θεȣ) most naturally means, filled with all the Gifts and Graces, that God is the Author and Giver of: But *all the Fulness of the* Godhead (παν το πληρωμα της Θεοτητος) is a quite different Phrase of inconceivably superior Signification: For *Godhead* is the one only divine Nature itself, by which God is what he is; and as all Acts of divine Goodness, Wisdom and Power, and the like, are constantly ascribed *to God,* and never, as far as I can recollect, to *the Godhead,* there seems to be a great Impropriety of Language in calling their Effects the *Fulness of the Godhead:* But the Fulness, or Perfection of Deity, is a natural Idea of all that is comprehended in Godhead; and all this is said to dwell in Christ.

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is made unto you of God, Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption; (1 Cor. i. 30) and who, suitable to the Dignity of his divine Person, as *all the Fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in him*, (ver. 9) is exalted in his Office-capacity to be sovereign Lord and Ruler of all Ranks and Degrees of Mankind; yea, of all, even the highest Orders of apostate Angels, who are under his Controul, as vanquish'd Enemies; (*ver.* 15) and of all the holy Angels, that excel in Strength, and are intirely under his Dominion, who sends them forth to minister to the Heirs of Salvation. (*Heb.* i. 14.)

11 *In whom also ye are circumcised with the Circumcision made without Hands, in putting off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh, by the Circumcision of Christ:*

11. In him also ye are so complete, as to have no need of the Ordinance of Circumcision, which the *Jewish* Zealots would impose upon you; for ye have a better Circumcision of the Heart, according to God's Promise to his People, and their Seed, (*Deut.* xxx. 6) even a spiritual Circumcision, (*Phil.* iii. 3) which is not effected, like that in the Flesh, by the Work of human Hands, but by the renewing Operation of the Spirit; and consists, not in cutting off the Foreskin of the Flesh, but in what was signified by it, even a Separation of the whole Body of Sin, which, like the natural Body, is made up of many Members or Parts, that spring from the Corruption of Nature, and are influenced, and exert themselves, by means of the fleshly Body, that ye may be deliver'd from its Guilt, Power and Defilement, and at length from the very In-being of it, by virtue of that spiritual Circumcision, which Christ is the Author of †.

12 *Buried with him in Baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the Faith of the Operation of God, who hath raised him from the Dead.*

12. And, instead of Circumcision in the Flesh, ye have by his Institution the Ordinance of Baptism, which is of like Signification, and answers the same Ends, as 'tis a Sign of, and Obligation to [illegible] Holiness, that is, or ought to be found in you, as God's Covenant-People, by your being conformable to Christ's Death, in utterly dying to Sin, and giving full Evidence of it with Continuance, as he died that it might be crucified, and was manifested to be intirely

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† *The Circumcision of Christ* can't mean his own Circumcision in the Flesh, the 8th Day: for that, as much as any other, was made by the Hands of Men; but *this* is said, in Opposition to that Sort of Circumcision, to be *made without Hands*, and refers to that spiritual Circumcision, of which Christ is the Author, and of which, as Circumcision formerly was, the Baptism of Christ's Institution now is the Sign; it signifying *not the putting away the Filth of the Flesh, but the Answer of a good Conscience toward God*; (1 Pet. iii. 21) and so, the Signification being the same, Baptism comes in the room of Circumcision, according to what is intimated in the next Verse, as the Lord's Supper does of the Passover. And this effectually answer'd the Objection of *Jewish* Zealots, as if, whatever internal Privileges were pretended to, there were a Defect as to *external Ordinances*, for want of Circumcision to signify and seal them: For the Apostle herein shews, that Christ has not only provided that his People should be Partakers of the Thing signified by it, but has also substituted another external Ordinance, of like Use, Signification and Design, to be continued under the Gospel State, more suitable to its Simplicity and spiritual Nature. But if the *Infants* of believing Parents were not to be baptized, under the Gospel Dispensation, a strong Objection would still have remained against their being complete in Christ, as to external Privileges; since the *Children* of the *Israelites*, under the *Mosaic* Dispensation, were to be circumcised as well as themselves.

dead, by his being buried, and continuing some Time in the Grave *. Your Privileges and Obligations are likewise signified in this Ordinance, as to your being quicken'd, and raised to a Life of Holiness, in Conformity to the risen Saviour, through that Faith, which is wrought, with almighty Energy in your Hearts, by the same exceeding Greatness of God's Power, (*Ephes.* i. 19, 20) which he exerted in raising Christ from the Dead; and will put forth, by virtue of his Resurrection, in raising you up to Eternal Life. (*Rom.* viii. 11, and 1 *Pet.* i. 3.)

13 *And you, being dead in your Sins, and the Uncircumcision of your Flesh, hath he quickned together with him, having forgiven you all Trespasses.*

13. And ye, who in your unregenerate State were dead in Law, under a just Sentence of Condemnation, on account of your Trespasses; and were dead toward God, and every thing that is spiritually good, in the Disposition of your Hearts, under the Power of corrupt Nature, which was signified, during the *Mosaic* Dispensation, by your being uncircumcised in the Flesh, he has now raised to a new Life of Grace and Holiness, in order to a heavenly Life of Glory and Blessedness, together with Christ, as your Head, by quickning Virtue derived from him, and in Conformity to his Resurrection from the Dead; God having, on his Account, freely forgiven you all and every one of your Iniquities, whether they be original or actual, greater or lesser Sins, that none of them might be imputed to you, or bind the Curse of the Law upon you, or be brought into Judgment against you, though ye never have been literally circumcised; and therefore that Ordinance can't be necessary to your Pardon and Acceptance with God to Eternal Life.

14 *Blotting out the Hand-writing of Ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the Way, nailing it to his Cross.*

14. Yea, as a Debt is evidently remitted, or discharged, by crossing and obliterating the Book, or Bond, or any Writing that stood against the Debtor; so, with regard to all of us who believe, whether we be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, he has blotted out our Transgressions, as it were by the Red Lines of Christ's Blood, and thereby disannulled the Law-Obligation to Punishment for them †, which testified against us

* *Buried with him* seems to relate rather to *Christ's Burial*, than to *our Baptism*: And *buried with him in Baptism* stands in Opposition to being *dead in Sins*, ver. 13; and is of the same Import with being *crucified with him*, and *dead with him*, as appears by comparing *Rom.* vi. 4, 6, 8, where these Terms are used as signifying the same Thing. (See also the Note on *Rom.* vi. 4.)

† Here is a manifest Allusion to various Ways of cancelling a Debt, and vacating a Bond, in a beautiful Gradation from blotting it out, to taking it quite away, and utterly destroying it, that there might be no Room for Fear of its ever appearing, or being any more in Force against us: And the last of these, which is expressed by *nailing* it to the Cross of Christ, may allude both to his Crucifixion, which disarmed the Law of its condemning Power, and Death of its Sting; and (as *Grotius* observes) to an ancient Custom of striking an antiquated Writing through with a Nail, to deface it, and render it for ever invalid. *The Hand-writing of Ordinances, that was against us, which was contrary to us*, &c. and was thus effectually disannulled, I take to include the whole Law of *Moses*, as a Covenant, though with a primary Respect to the ceremonial Law: But the *moral*, as well as ceremonial Law, might be called *the Hand-writing of Ordinances, that was against us*, as it was written by the Appointment of God, and practically subscribed to by *Israel*; (Deut. v. 27) and both together contained an Acknowledgment of their Guilt, Depravity and Obnoxiousness to Wrath, and of their

us all, as Transgressors, as well as separated the *Gentiles* from the Church and Privileges of the *Jews*, and was the Cause of Enmity between them: He has also removed it out of the Way, that it may never be found, and produced, or brought into Dispute against us: And that it might be utterly nullified, as a Bond that stood out against us, he has, as it were, rent and torn it to Pieces, by nailing it to the Cross, on which our Lord was fastened by the Nails, that pierced him through his Hands and Feet, when he died our Sacrifice, and *redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us.* (Gal. iii. 13.)

15 And *having spoiled Principalities and Powers, he made*

15. And having vanquished, and disarmed all the Powers of Darkness, the Devil their Chief, and all the Ranks and Orders of apostate Spirits with him *, He, as the Seed of the Woman,

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their Need of a better Sacrifice and Purification, than the ceremonial Law could afford, which included an Obligation to observe the moral Law, that was written by the Finger of God; and, upon Failure of Obedience, subjected them to its Curse, and so was a *Ministration of Death and Condemnation*; (2 Cor. iii. 7, 9) and in that View, the *Jews* were most immediately concerned in it: And yet the *Doctrine* contained in it affected the *Gentiles* (whose Consciences convicted them of Sin) as well as the *Jews*. It therefore seems to have been with special Design, that the Apostle alters the *Person*, in this Verse, from *you* to *us*, to intimate that the Benefit, brought in by Christ, related in common to Believers of both Sorts, and that 'tis not to be confined to *Gentiles*, as some understand it, who consider the ceremonial Law only, as said to be contrary to them by excluding them from the Privileges and Blessings of the *Jews*. But had this been the Apostle's precise and restrictive Intention, it is very strange that, while he was speaking of *Gentiles* in the *second Person* all along just before, and returned to speak of them in the same Manner at *ver.* 6, and so on to the End of the Epistle, he should vary the Person here, and that without any apparent Reason for it, when it would have been most evidently proper and accurate to have continued it, without any Alteration. For this Reason therefore, among others relating to what equally concerned them both, I can't readily go into the Interpretation, that makes this Passage relate *merely* to the Contrariety of the ceremonial Law to the *Gentiles*, though that be included in it, as it was a middle Wall of Partition between them and the *Jews*. (Vid. *Zanch.* in loc. and *Witf.* de defect. V. T. ad calc. Oeconom. Fœd. pag. 818, 819.)

* Mr. *Peirce*, in a large Note on this Text, has endeavoured to establish a new Notion, as tho' by the *Principalities and Powers*, here spoken of, were meant, not the *evil*, but *good Angels*. There is great Ingenuity in the Conjecture, and much Labour employ'd in Criticism to maintain it. But, upon the most careful Examination, it don't appear to me to be sufficiently supported: For, admitting that *he spoiled Principalities and Powers* is not predicated of *Christ*, but of *God the Father*, 'tis most naturally to be understood of what the Father did by Christ, in his triumphant Death; and yet, as Christ's Cross, mention'd in the Close of the foregoing Verse, is the immediate Antecedent to this, it seems plain and easy enough to refer the *spoiling of Principalities and Powers* to him, as what he himself has done, by his Sufferings and Death, in obtaining the Conquest over them. And as to its Connexion with the Context, which this learned Writer thinks can't be made out, but upon his Interpretation, What can be more agreeable to the Apostle's Design to prove, that Believers are *complete in Christ*, (ver. 10) than to show that they are not only Partakers of the spiritual Circumcision, which is signified by the New Testament-Ordinance of Baptism, and are quickned with Christ, and forgiven all Trespasses, and acquitted from Law-Obligations that stood in Force against them; but that all the Powers of Darkness are also intirely vanquished for them by his Cross? And what the Apostle had said, *ver.* 10, about Christ's being the *Head of all Principality and Power*, is a sufficient Reason against *worshipping of Angels*, ver. 18, 19. This Gentleman, in further Support of his own Interpretation, supposes that, before our Saviour's Time, the good Angels had Provinces and Dominions allotted them, one presiding over one Country, and another over another Country, which he apprehends is intimated by the Mention, that is made of the Princes of *Persia* and *Grecia*, and *Michael* the Prince, *Dan.* x. 13, 20, 21; but that, at our Lord's Resurrection, this Power was taken from them, and they, being all divested of their Dominion, were placed in Subjection to him. But though 'tis undoubtedly true, that Christ is in our Nature raised *far above all Principalities and Powers*, and that *Angels, Authorities and Powers are made subject to him*; (Ephes. i. 20, 21, and 1 Pet. iii. 22) yet I know of

a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

Woman, that was to bruise the Serpent's Head, (*Gen.* iii. 15.) and God the Father, by him, exposed them to open Contempt and Shame, in the View of all the holy Angels, as Spoils of War, triumphing like a glorious Conqueror over them, in Virtue of his Cross, (*ver.* 14.) as his Sufferings upon it were a complete Satisfaction to divine Justice for Sin, and as he *through Death destroyed him, that had the Power of Death, that is the Devil,* (Heb. ii. 14.) and did this by his own Strength, without the Aid or Assistance of any Creature whatsoever. (*Isa.* lxiii. 3.)

16 *Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy-day, or of the new-moon, or of the sabbath-*days:

16. Since therefore the believing *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, are complete in Christ, (*ver.* 10.) and the Hand-writing of Ordinances, that was contrary to both, is now cancel'd. (See the Note on *ver.* 14.) Let no *Jewish* Zealot pretend; (μη τις υμας κρινέτω) or, if any of them should be so rash and presumptuous, Let none of you be troubled at their vain Pretences, to censure and condemn you, as tho' ye were excluded from Salvation, because ye don't observe their legal Rites: As, to instance in some Particulars, which, together with Circumcision, they lay great Stress upon, None ought to judge and condemn you, for not abstaining from *Jewish* Meats, or Drinks, as forbidden in their Law; or on Account of your neglecting to keep their religious annual Festivals, such as the Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles; or their monthly Feasts at the first Appearance of the New Moon; * or even their Seventh Day Weekly Sabbaths, which God instituted to be peculiarly observed by them, under the *Mosaic* Dispensation.

17 Which

of no Intimation in Scripture, that he has reduced their Powers, or taken away any thing from them, which they ever had before; nor does it seem very agreeable to the *Grace* that shines forth in his Headship to Angels, as well as Men, to suppose that he came to deprive, or divest them of any Dignity, or Dominion, that they before were possessed of: Nor is what is said in *Dan.* x. 13, 20, 21, about the Princes of *Persia* and *Greece*, and *Michael* the Prince, any real Proof of distinct Dominions being assigned to different Angels over different Countries; for though *Michael*, which some suppose to be Christ himself, and others a chief Minister of the Heavenly Host under him, appeared for *Israel* against their Enemies; yet the Princes of *Persia* and *Greece* may most naturally be understood of *Earthly* Princes, that were set over these Kingdoms, according to the common Interpretation: And if *Angels* were supposed to be intended by these Princes, one can hardly think they were *good Angels*, since one of them contended against the other, and none but *Michael* the Prince held with the Angel that spake to *Daniel*. As to some further Criticisms of this Author's, to maintain his Point, he supposes that there is no Necessity of taking the Words, *he made a Shew of them openly*, in an *ill Sense*; and we may with as good Reason suppose, that there is no necessity of taking *Triumphing over them*, to signify (as he renders it) *causing them to triumph*; for tho' it be so translated in 2 *Cor.* ii. 14, yet the Word itself, which is used only in these two Places of the New Testament, most properly and frequently signifies *to Triumph*; and so is to be construed one Way, or the other, according as the Subject-Matter leads to it, and not, without Necessity, in the less usual Sense. And in that parallel Text, *Ephes.* iv. 8. where the Apostle speaks of Christ's *leading Captivity captive*, the Allusion is to the Triumph of Conquerors over their Enemies; and in *Ps.* lxviii. 17, 18. the Place there referr'd to, the holy Angels are represented *as his Attendants*, and not as the *vanquished Captives*, in his triumphant Ascension. (See also the Notes on *Ephes.* iv. 8.)

* *Sabbaths* seem to be here meant of the *Seventh Day Sabbath*, because distinguished from the anniversary and monthly Festivals of the *Jews*; and because this is the common Import of the Word *Sabbath* in the New Testament, and is always so in the Old, when mentioned in Conjunction with, or in Con-

17 *Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.*

17. Which Sort of Ordinances, so far forth as they were merely ceremonial and *Jewish*, were only Types, Figures, or Adumbrations of the good Things of the Gospel: (*Heb.* x. 1.) But, in Opposition to these Shadows, the Reality, Truth, or Substance of the Things themselves, are brought in by Christ, and to be sought and found only in him. *The Law came by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.* (John i. 17.)

18 *Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility, and wor-*

18. And since he, in whom ye are complete, is the Head of all Principality and Power, (*ver.* 10. and see the Note on *ver.* 15.) Let no one (μηδεὶς ὑμᾶς καταβραβευέτω) whether *Jewish* Zealot or *Gentile* Philosopher, take upon him † unjustly to

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Contradistinction to *New Moons* and *Feasts*. (See Dr. *Whitby*'s Note on the Place) But then the Caution against a religious Regard to it is to be considered, only with Reference to the Obligations, that lay on the *Jews* to observe *that particular Day*, during the *Mosaic* Dispensation, and its attending *ritual* Observances, which did not belong to *the Morality* of the Sabbath; nor are obligatory upon Christians, any more than the *Seventh Day* itself, under the Gospel-State: But the devoting of a *seventh Part of Time* in a holy Manner to the Lord, belongs unchangeably to the *moral* Nature and Obligation of the *fourth Commandment*, which is transfer'd in the New Testament, from the *seventh* to the *first* Day of the Week. (See the Notes on *John* xx. 26. and *Acts* xx. 7.) To this it may not be amiss to add the judicious Note of Mr. *Kennicott* in his Dissertation on the Oblations of *Cain* and *Abel*, P. 184, 185, where he says, "The Sabbath, or Weekly Day of Holiness, might well be called a *Sign to the* Jews; for the *Jewish* Sabbath was a *Sign*, as being founded on a double Reason, the second of which (the *Egyptian* Deliverance) evidently distinguished that People from all others, and was therefore as a Sign constantly to remind them of the particular Care of Heaven, and what uncommon Returns of Goodness they were to make for so signal a Deliverance. But there is great Reason to believe, that the Sabbath of the *Israelites* was altered with their Year, at their coming forth from *Egypt*; and a short Attention to this Point may not be here improper, the Case then seems to be this: At the finishing of the Creation, God sanctified the Seventh Day; this Seventh Day, being the first Day of *Adam*'s Life, was consecrated by way of First-fruits to God; and therefore *Adam* may reasonably be supposed to have *began* his Computation of the *Days of the Week* with the *first whole Day* of his own Existence; Thus the Sabbath became the first Day of the Week; but when Mankind fell from the Worship of the true God, they first substituted the Worship of the Sun, in his Place, and preserving the same weekly Day of Worship, but devoting it to the Sun, the Sabbath was called *Sunday*; for that *Sunday* was the first Day of the Week, and is so still in the East, is proved by Mr. *Selden* (Jus. Nat. and Gent. Lib. 3. Cap. 22.) Thus the *Sabbath of the Patriarchs* continued to be the *Sunday of the Idolaters*, till the coming up of the *Israelites* out of *Egypt*; and then, as God altered the Beginning of their Year, so he also changed the Day of their Worship from *Sunday* to *Saturday*; the first Reason of which might be, that as *Sunday* was the Day of Worship among the Idolaters, the *Israelites* would be more likely to join with them, if they rested on the same Day, than if they were to work on that Day, and serve their God upon another. But a second Reason certainly was, in order to perpetuate the Memory of *their Deliverance on that Day from* Egyptian *Slavery*; for *Moses*, when he applies the fourth Commandment to the particular Cases of his own People, *Deut.* v. 15, does not inforce it, as in *Ex.* xx. 11. by the Consideration of *God's resting on that Day* which was the Sabbath of the Patriarchs; but binds it upon them by saying, *Remember that thou wast a servant in Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty Hand, and by a stretched-out Arm; therefore the Lord thy God hath commanded* THEE *to keep this* SABBATH-DAY. Allowing then the preceding Observations, we immediately see, how the Sabbath naturally reverted to *Sunday*, after the Abolition of *Judaism* without any express Command for the Alteration.' To which he adds a Quotation from Bp. *Cumberland*, (Orig. Gent. Antiq. p. 400) which speaks of the *Gentiles*, as called, after Christ's Time into the same universal Church with the Patriarchs; and another from *Justin Martyr*, (Apolog. prim. Edit. Thirlby, p. 98) which I find in the *Paris* Edition of *Justin Martyr*'s 2d Apology, p. 99. The Purport of which is, that all Christians generally assembled for religious Worship on the *Sunday*; because it is the first Day after that, in which God had finished the Creation of the World; and on the same Day of the Week, Jesus Christ, our Saviour, rose from the Dead. (See also Dr. *Owen* on the *Sabbath*.)

† Here is a plain Allusion to the *Brabeutæ*, or Officers, that judged, and sometimes falsely judged the Prize to Wrestlers, Racers, &c. in the *Grecian* Games.

shipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puft up by his fleshly mind;

deprive you of that glorious Prize of the eternal Inheritance, which is adjudged in the Gospel to every true Believer; or lead you out of the Way to it, by drawing you into a willing Compliance with the false and affected Humility of Mens own devising, and not of God's commanding; and, under that Disguise, into paying religious Worship to Angels, or inferior Dæmons, as Mediators and Intercessors, on Pretence of its being too bold and presumptuous to approach the Divine Majesty, without their Interposition between him and you: The Pretender to these Notions arrogantly attempts to pry into such Things, as God has never revealed, and as are quite above his Reach, and he has no Knowledge of; and wou'd determine about them under the Power of his own vain and carnal Mind, that is blown up and swelled with Self-Conceit, and the Pride of human Reasonings about God and Angels, and the Way of a Sinner's Access to him, and with a fond Desire of being thought wiser, than other Men.

19 *And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.*

19. And such an one runs into these corrupt Notions to the high Dishonour of Jesus Christ, rejecting, instead of laying hold by Faith on him, or adhering to, and trusting alone in him, as the only and all-sufficient Mediator and Advocate, to recommend us and our Prayers to divine Acceptance; and joining mere Creatures in Office with him, who is the Head of Rule and Dominion over both the holy and the fallen Angels, (*ver.* 10.) as well as over all the other Works of his Hand; and is the representative and vital, as well as governing Head of the Church; from whom all the Members of his mystical Body, deriving spiritual Nourishment, are united to him and to one another, by his Spirit, and by Faith and Love, and by Means of religious Ordinances, which answer to the Joints, Ligaments and Nerves, that unite the Members of the Natural Body one to another, and to their Head; and so increase in Light and Grace, Comfort, Holiness and Strength, and in every excellent and abounding Improvement of a spiritual Nature, which God is the Author of, and which is well pleasing in his Sight through Jesus Christ, and to his Praise and Glory.

20 *Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the World; why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances;*

20. If therefore, according to the Meaning and Engagement of your Baptism, (*ver.* 12.) ye be spiritually dead with Christ; and if by Virtue of his Death, who nail'd the Hand-Writing of Ordinances to his Cross, (*ver.* 14.) ye be as effectually discharged, as though ye were corporally dead, from all Obligations to pay any Regard to *Jewish* Institutions, which may be called the Rudiments, or Elements of the World, (*Gal.* iv. 3. See the Paraphrase there) Why then, as though ye were Persons of a worldly Temper, and living under such a carnal Dispensation, are ye still burden'd with legal Ordinances, by those that would dogmatically impose them upon you? (δογματίζεσθε)

21 *Touch not, taste not, handle not:*

21. Such, for Instance, as relate to the Difference of Meats, and consist in strict Prohibitions to this Effect, * *viz.* Never venture to eat; no, nor taste; nor so much as in the least touch any of those Meats, that are ceremonially unclean.

22 *Which all are to perish with the using) after the commandments and doctrines of men?*

22. All which Meats are nevertheless appointed of God, for the Use of Man under the Gospel-State; and, are consumed and cast into the Draught, in using them, and so cannot defile the Soul. (*Mat.* xi. 15, 17.) And if, ye being now dead with Christ to the formerly divine Ordinances about these Things, (*ver.* 20.) they ought not to be enjoyn'd, or observed, on the Foot of *human* Authority, How much less ought your Consciences to be imposed upon in Things that neither have, nor ever had any Foundation in the Word of God; but, like the worshipping of Angels, &c. (*ver.* 18.) are merely human Inventions, inforc'd upon you by the arbitrary Will and Dictates of Men?

23 *Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will-worship and humility, and neglecting of the body, not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.*

23. These their Commandments and Doctrines are indeed added to those of the abolished *Mosaic* Law, under the specious Appearances of human Wisdom, in contriving Means of paying redundant Honour to God, by superstitious Worship and Services, as Free-will-Offerings of our own, beyond all that he had prescribed, or required; and in Expressions of extraordinary Humility; (*ver.* 18.) as also in Mortifications of the Body by uninstituted Acts of Self-Denial, and not shewing any Esteem of those Things, that might gratify and refresh animal Nature: Whereas, in Reality, all this pretended Shew of Wisdom, Humility and Mortifications has nothing worthy in itself, or truly honourable to God; but is only suited to cultivate and please the false Taste of Men of corrupt Minds.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How affectionate are Christ's Servants to his People, whether they be personally acquainted with them, or not! And how solicitous for their Union, Comfort and Increase in the Knowledge of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ! How delighted in Reflections on their Faith and Order! And how concerned that, as they have received Christ in all his Offices, they may walk in him, with Stedfastness of Faith, Love and Obedience, and with Gratitude and Praise according to what they have learned and received from him! And O how glorious is our Lord in his divine Nature, as possessed of all the Fulness of the Godhead, and in his human Nature and Office-Capacity, as inriched with all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, for executing the high and important Trust committed to him! Believers can't but be complete in him, whose divine and mediatorial Characters are so great and excellent, who is the Head of Dominion over all the holy and fallen Angels, and the Head of Representation, Government and Influence to the Church; all the Members of which are closely united to him and one another, and derive all Supplies of Grace and spiritual Nourishment from him,

* Several Criticks have observed, that *Touch not* (μη αψη) sometimes signifies *Eat not*; and so the Gradation of these *Jewish* Prohibitions is very clear and strong, as tasting is less than eating, and handling is less than tasting; and the next Verse shews that they intirely relate *to Meats that perish with the using.* (See Bishop *Davenant* and Mr. *Peirce* on the Place.)

in such Ways of Union and Communication, as are answerable to those of the natural Body. They are quickned by his Spirit from their former Death in Sin; are forgiven all Trespasses, and made conformable to his Death and Resurrection, according to the Meaning and Obligation of their Baptism, which comes in the Room of Circumcision, and is to be applied to the same sort of Subjects; and they are delivered from all Obligations of the ceremonial, and moral Law too, as a Covenant of Works, and from its Curse, which, for Failure of Obedience to its Precepts, stood against them. But, blessed be God, the whole Frame of legal Ordinances, that one Way or other testified against them, is now demolished by the Cross of Christ, who is the Substance of its Shadows, as they are fulfilled in him; and has taken away its Curse, as bore by him; and who, by Means of his own Death, has intirely subdued, disarmed, and publickly triumphed over, all the Devils in Hell, as his Captives in Chains. What therefore have Believers to do any more with *Jewish* abolished Meats and Drinks, or their solemn Feasts and Seventh Day Sabbath, or their ceremonial Rites of any Kind? How much much less ought they to fall in with human Inventions and Injunctions, relating to the Worship of God! How careful should they be, never to pay religious Homage to him by the Mediation of Saints or Angels, to the Disparagement and Rejection of Christ, as their only Head and Advocate, or in any Way that he has not prescribed in his Word! They are dead with him to all these Things, and whatever Pretences there may be of Wisdom, Humility and Mortification of the Body, in them, Let none deceive us by enticing Words, nor condemn us for neglecting them; nor lead us out of the Way to Eternal Life, by drawing us into an Observation of them. They are all Will-Worship, of Mens own devising, to sooth the Pride and carnal Temper of those, that would be wise above what is written, and pry into Things, that they know nothing of. They are Works of Superorogation and Superstition, that bring no Honour to God, whatsoever is pretended by Men. May we therefore keep fast Hold by Faith on Christ, and stedfastly adhere to him, as our Head, and abide by his Institutions, and never submit our Consciences to the Ordinances, Doctrines and Commandments of Men!

CHAP. III.

The Apostle exhorts the Colossians *to be heavenly-minded, as those that are risen with Christ,* 1—4, *to mortify all corrupt Affections, as those that are renewed after the Image of God,* 5—11, *to cultivate mutual Love, Forbearance and Forgiveness, with other evangelical Graces,* 12—17, *and to practise the relative Duties of Wives and Husbands, Children, Parents and Servants,* 18—25.

TEXT.	*PARAPHRASE.*
1 IF *ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.*	1. IF, as I trust, according to your Profession, ye be indeed risen from the Death of Sin to the Life of Righteousness, through the Faith of the Operation of God, (*Chap.* ii. 12.) together with, in Conformity to, and by the quickning Virtue of a risen Saviour, Shew that ye are so, by the elevated Temper, and Outgoings of your Hearts, as aspiring upwards in your Meditations and Views, Enquiries and earnest Pursuits, by Prayer, and all other Ordinances of divine Appointment, after realizing, clear and enlarged Experiences and Assurances of the durable, substantial and satisfying Things, that relate to a future World of all Delights, that lies far above all visible Heavens, (*Ephes.* iv. 10.) where Jesus, your ascended Head in

in human Nature is, and because he is there exalted in all his Majesty and Authority, Dignity and Glory, Blessedness, Rest and Safety, as these are metaphorically signified by his sitting at the Right-hand of God the Father, (see the Note on *Acts* vii. 55) to secure your best and eternal Interests, by making continual Intercession, and preparing a Place for you, that *where he is there ye may be also, to behold his Glory.* (John xiv. 3, and xvii. 24.)

2 *Set your Affection on Things above, not on Things on the Earth.*

2. Let all your Affections of Desire and Hope, Love and Delight, be supremely fixed, like spiritually-minded Men, (*Rom.* viii. 5) with Relish and Savour, (φρονεῖτε) upon those excellent Things, that belong to, and are transacted in that upper State, which far surpass all our Thoughts; and not upon the empty, uncertain, perishing and defiling Pleasures and Enjoyments of this World; nor upon the ceremonial Rudiments of it, which are as much below the Worth and Dignity of these sublime Felicities, as the Earth is inferior to Heaven: And 'tis highly fit that ye, as Christians, should seek after, and set your Affections on Heavenly Things.

3 *For ye are dead, and your Life is hid with Christ in God.*

3. For ye are, by Profession and Obligation, and all true Believers among you are, by Communion with Christ in his Death, really dead in your Hearts and Affections, as to the *Mosaic* Law, and crucified, with him, to Sin and the World, (*Rom.* vi. 2, 6, and *Gal.* vi. 14) so as not to seek your Portion, and place your Happiness in Earthly Things: And all the Entertainments and Enjoyments of your spiritual Life are maintained, and carried on, in secret Transactions between God and your own Souls here, till they shall be perfected in an eternal Life of all Blessedness and Glory hereafter, by virtue of your mystical Union with Christ your Head, who himself is essentially united with God the Father, as he is in the Son, and the Son in the Father. (*John* xiv. 11, and xvii. 21; see the Notes there.) The Things of this Heavenly Life are out of Sight, they being hid, as much as Christ himself now is, from an Eye of Sense, and from the Conceptions of a carnal Mind; and after all that Believers themselves experience of them, they *know not what they shall be*; (1 John iii. 2) and they are the most excellent Things, that are securely treasured up with Christ, in the secret Purposes, and in the immediate Presence of God the Father, as a safe and precious Reserve for you, *ready to be revealed in the last Times.* (1 Pet. i. 4, 5.)

4 *When Christ,* who is *our Life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in Glory.*

4. When Christ, who lives in us, (*Gal.* ii. 20) and is the Purchaser, Author, Sustainer and Finisher, and the Scope and End of our spiritual Life, shall appear, as the Judge of the whole World, in his own Glory, and in the Glory of his Father, and of all the Holy Angels; (*Luke* ix. 26) then ye also, who are quickned by his Spirit, shall be glorified with him, and shine forth, in Soul and Body, with a Glory

a Glory resembling that, in which he himself will be manifested as your Head and Saviour. (*Phil.* iii. 21.)

5 Mortify therefore your Members which are upon the Earth; Fornication, Uncleanness, inordinate Affection, evil Concupiscence, and Covetousness, which is Idolatry:

5. In Prospect therefore of this blessed Day, and in Reflection on the Spirituality, Purity and sublime Happiness ye shall then enjoy, as those that are risen with Christ, and dead to Sin and the Pleasures of this World, Labour, *through the Spirit, to mortify the Deeds of the Body*; (Rom. viii. 13) that ye may daily subdue them more and more, (νεκρώσατε) till ye have intirely slain all the Remainders of your carnal Inclinations to iniquitous and earthly Things; which may be consider'd as so many Members of the Old Man, the Body of Sin, that execute its Designs about earthly Things, and are influenced, and exert themselves, by the Members of the natural Body, (see the Note on *Rom.* vi. 13) while ye continue in this imperfect State upon Earth. To instance in some Particulars, that are a Shame to the Christian-Character, Exert your holy Principles, under divine Influence, to gain an absolute Conquest over all Sorts of unlawful Embraces, whether in the single or married Life; (see the Note 1 *Cor.* v. 1) all Impurity in Thought, Word or Deed; all Propensions to any Sin, and particularly that of Unchastity; all the first Motions to it in Heart; and all excessive Desire after the Enjoyments of this World, which is spiritual Idolatry, as it sets the Creature in the Place of, or at least in a Competition with God himself, and draws the Heart, and its Trust and Confidence, off from him to them.

6 For which Things Sake, the Wrath of God cometh on the Children of Disobedience.

6. All these, and every thing of a like sinful Nature, are to be abandoned and abhorred, as defiling and provoking Evils, on account of, and for the Punishment of which, the Justice of God breaks forth in Executions of his terrible Indignation, sometimes in this World, and certainly in the next, on the refractory Sons (ἀπειθείας) of Infidelity, and Disobedience to his Commands.

7 In the which ye also walked sometime, when ye lived in them.

7. In which sinful Courses ye yourselves formerly went on, with Indulgence and Choice, in the Days of your Unbelief and Unregeneracy; when, while dead toward God, ye lived in the Love and Practice of them, committing all Iniquity with Greediness.

8 But now ye also put off all these; Anger, Wrath, Malice, Blasphemy, filthy Communication out of your Mouth.

8. But now ye, as Christians renewed by Grace, ought to have no further Fellowship with these Deeds of Darkness; *the Time past of your Life should suffice to have wrought the Will of the Gentiles:* (1 Pet. iv. 3) And together with these fleshly Corruptions, ye ought to discard and utterly renounce all the following Sins, that most immediately deprave the Soul; such as causeless and intemperate Anger; and furious Passion, which is the Height of Anger; and a malicious revengeful Spirit, which is worst of all: Ye ought also to avoid all Manner of Language, that discovers a bad Disposition of Heart; such as speaking reproachfully of God and sacred Things, and speaking evil of others, (*Eph.* iv. 31)

to blast their Name, Reputation and Usefulness, or to be any way injurious to them; and ye should abstain from all immodest Expressions, which tend to defile your own, or others Minds, that nothing of this Kind may ever proceed out of your Lips.

9 *Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the Old Man with his Deeds;*

9. Take heed also of ever speaking any thing contrary to Truth, with a Design of deceiving one another, which would be to imitate, and act under the Influence of the Father of Lies, (*John* viii. 44) and is inconsistent with your holy Character, Privileges and Obligations; since, according to your Profession, ye, as I trust, have sincerely and absolutely cast off, and renounced the Body of Sin, with all its pernicious and defiling Practices, which may be consider'd as the *Old Man*, that is as antient as your Beings, and works with Subtilty in you; but which is now in a decaying State, and will soon expire, like a Man of decrepid Old Age, that is daily declining in his Strength, and hastning to the Grave: (See the Paraphrase on *Rom*. vi. 6, and *Ephes*. iv. 22.) It is a shameful, self-contradictious Thing for you, who, as Members of Christ, *have crucified the Flesh with its Affections and Lusts*, (Ga. v. 24) to give way to any of these Abominations.

10 *And have put on the New* Man, *which is renewed in Knowledge after the Image of him that created him.*

10. And 'tis much more so, as by a Work of Heart-changing Grace ye have assumed, and as it were clothed yourselves with, the holy Qualities, and beautiful Ornaments of the new Creature; which is a Restoration to the divine Likeness, and consists of spiritual Light and Knowledge, in the renewing of your Minds, as well as of Righteousness and true Holiness, in the renewing of your Hearts and Lives, (*Ephes*. iv. 23, 24) according to the pure and spotless Image of God, or of Christ, who at first created Man after his own Likeness, which was defaced by the Fall; but in which he anew creates him, by supernatural Grace, as *God's Workmanship in Christ Jesus*, (Ephes. ii. 10) and in Conformity to him. (*Rom*. viii. 29.)

11 *Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, Circumcision nor Uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, Bond* nor *Free: But Christ* is *all, and in all.*

11. In which new Creation, and the Benefits of it, there is no partial Respect to Persons, on account of any external Privileges, or the Want of them; not to the *Gentiles*, the most polite of which are the *Greeks*; nor to the *Jews*; no, nor to the most learned among them; not to them that have been circumcised in the Flesh, and glory in it; nor to them, whom they disdain for their being uncircumcised; nor to the more rude and barbarous Nations among the *Gentiles*; no, not to the most savage of them all, like those that dwell in the uncultivated Region of *Scythia* *; nor to Masters.

* *Scythia* was a vast Country, that lay with great Extent both in *Asia* and *Europe*, and was divided into several Parts in the *Asiatic* and *European* Districts; and the *Scythians* were an exceeding brutish, savage Sort of People, a large Account of whom, and of *Scythia*, may be seen under this Word, in *Collier's* great Historical Dictionary: And as the *Greeks* were the most learned and polite, and the *Scythians*

Masters or Servants, Free Men or Slaves: But as to Persons of all these external Characters, without regarding or disregarding them, for the sake of any such Distinctions, Christ is their All who believe in him: He is All in the whole of their Salvation; and they are *complete in him:* (Chap. ii. 10) He is All in all their Hopes and Confidences, Esteem and Comforts; in all their Privileges and Enjoyments; and in all their Acceptance with God, Preservation and Security for Eternal Life; and he is All in the effectual Workings of his Spirit in them all: So that nothing is to be regarded by any of them, in Point of saving Advantage, but Christ; and nothing will stand them in stead, but an Interest in him, *who of God is made unto them Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption, that no Flesh might glory in his Presence, but he that glorieth, might glory in the Lord.* (1 Cor. i. 29, 30, 31.)

12 *Put on therefore, as the Elect of God, holy and beloved, Bowels of Mercies, Kindness, Humbleness of Mind, Meekness, Long-suffering;*

12. In an intire Dependence therefore on Christ, as those, *whom God hath chosen in him before the Foundation of the World, that ye should be holy, and without Blame before him in Love;* (Ephes. i. 4) whom he hath accordingly formed unto Holiness, and regards as the Objects of his special Love; Let it be your great Concern and Endeavour, that, instead of the Works of the Flesh, which ye are to put off, (*ver.* 8) ye may assume the Practice of, and as it were clothe yourselves with the tenderest Compassion toward the Miserable and Distressed, in Imitation of your heavenly Father, who is eminently merciful; (*Luke* vi. 36) with a generous, friendly and benevolent Temper and Behaviour towards one another, and towards all Men; *Gal.* vi. 10) with modest Thoughts of yourselves, and Condescension to Persons of low Degree; with Gentleness, Mildness and Candour towards all ye have to do with, as learning of our great Lord, who was *meek and lowly in Heart;* (Mat. xi. 29) and with persevering Patience under repeated and long-continued Provocations, in Consideration of God's Long-suffering toward you.

13 *Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any Man have a Quarrel against any: Even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.*

13. Let all this be attended with a bearing and forbearing Spirit, one towards another, (*Ephes.* iv. 2) under various Infirmities; and with a mutually forgiving Temper in case of Offences: So that if there be any one, that thinks himself to be injured by, or to have Matter of Complaint against, one or another of his Brethren; as ye hope and profess, that Christ, in the Greatness of his Love, and at the Expence of his own Blood, hath freely and fully pardoned all your Trespasses, which are infinitely greater than any that can be committed against you: Even so, in Imita-

Scythians the most barbarous of the *Gentiles*, the Paraphrase has taken in a View of the different Ranks of all Nations among the *Gentiles*, as well as of the general Distinction of them from the *Jews*, and the different Ranks of People among both.

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tion of, and influenced by the Riches of his Grace, and in Obedience unto his awful Injunctions, (*Mat.* vi. 12, 14, 15) Be ye ready to forgive one another those comparatively small Offences, that any may have given you.

14 *And above all these Things, put on Charity, which is the Bond of Perfectness.*

14. And let it be your principal Care to put on brotherly Christian-love, like an upper Garment †, to spread over, and add a beauteous Lustre to all these Graces; even that Love, which, in its Principle, Tendency and Design, is the fulfilling of the Law, (*Rom.* xiii. 10) and is the noblest Bond of Union and Peace, (*Ephes.* iv. 3) to keep every other Grace in its regular Exercise, and to knit all the Members of Christ together in most perfect Harmony, till the whole mystical Body shall grow up in all things to its perfect Stature in him. (*Ephes.* iv. 11—15.)

15 *And let the Peace of God rule in your Hearts, to the which also ye are called in one Body; and be ye thankful.*

15. And for the better cultivating this brotherly Love, See to it, that a Sense of your being in a State of Friendship with God, through Jesus Christ, which is a *Peace that passeth all Understanding*, (Phil. iv. 7) engage you to the Love and Practice of that excellent Peace and Concord among yourselves, which God is the Author and Approver of, and enjoins *: Let this Peace, in both these Views, inthrone itself, and have the governing Sway in your Hearts; (*εἰς ἣν*) into which happy State of Peace with God, and one another, ye are called by the Grace of the Gospel, as all of you together, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, are *one Body of Christ, and Members in particular:* (1 Cor. xii. 27) And, in Reflection on this, let all the Powers of your Souls unite in Gratitude and Praise to the God of such a wonderful Mercy.

16 *Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all Wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, singing with Grace in your Hearts to the Lord:*

16. In order to your being established in an abiding Sense of this Peace with God, and in this Harmony with your Christian-Brethren, and indeed in every Grace before mentioned; Let the whole Word of God, which Christ is the Author of, as it was indited by his Spirit; (1 *Pet.* i. 11) and particularly let the Gospel, of which he is not only the Author, but also the main Subject, (*Rom.* i. 3) have a permanent and predominant Residence, not in your Heads only, but in your Hearts, with all the Riches of spiritual Knowledge and Understanding, that are to be derived from it, for making a wise and proper Use of its various Parts on all Occasions, to the Glory of God, your Direction in the Way of Duty, and Edification unto complete Salvation;

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† *And above all Things* (ἐπὶ πᾶσι δὲ τούτοις) may as well be render'd, *over all these*, meaning the Virtues or Graces before-mention'd; and both Senses are attended to in the Paraphrase.

* As *the Peace of God* is said to *pass all Understanding*, in Phil. iv. 7, which was wrote about the same Time with this Epistle, and is the only Place besides, where this Phrase, *the Peace of God*, is used, we are led to understand it here, as well as there, of the Peace that Believers have *with God*: But as Peace *one with another* seems most agreeable to the general Scope of this Context, I think it ought not to be excluded; and as a *Sense* of Peace with God is the best Foundation of, and has the most powerful Influence to promote, Peace among Fellow-Christians, I see no Impropriety in supposing, that the Apostle might comprehend them both.

and for living abundantly under the Power of it: And be ye mutually helpful in instructing and exciting one another to bless and praise the Lord, as by all other Means, in public or private; so particularly in the Ordinance of *singing with the Voice together*, (Isa. lii. 8) and thereby celebrating the Honours of his Name in sacred Poesy; some Compositions of which may be stiled *Psalms*, others *Hymns*, and others *Spiritual Songs*; which God has provided for the Use of his Church in his Word, and in occasional Productions of inspired Prophets, under an immediate Afflatus of the Spirit: (see the Note on *Eph.* v. 19) And which ever of these ye may join in, it ought to be, not only with a graceful harmonious Voice, but with spiritual Affections, and an Exercise of suitable Graces in your Hearts towards our Lord Jesus Christ, and God in him, which is the best of all Melody; the sweetest to your own Souls, and most acceptable to him.

17 *And whatsoever ye do in Word or Deed*, do *all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving Thanks to God and the Father by him.*

17. And in all Cases, as well as these, whatsoever ye engage in, whether in Discourse or Behaviour, in public or private, relating to the civil or religious Life, Let it be with a conscientious Regard to the Authority and Command of the Lord Jesus Christ, with an humble Dependence on him for all Direction, Assistance and Acceptance, and with an Eye to his, together with his Father's Glory; and let it be attended with Thanksgivings *always for all Things* (Ephes. v. 20) to God, even his Father and your Father in him, as the great Mediator, on whose Account all Blessings come to you; and therefore through whom all Thank-offerings for what ye have received, as well as all Prayers for what ye need, are to be presented to God, that they may be well pleasing in his Sight: (*Heb.* xiii. 15, 16, and 1 *Pet.* ii. 5.) These are Duties, that belong to you all in common; but there are others, that are peculiar to your different civil Stations.

18 *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own Husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.*

18. As Christian-Religion don't dissolve, but strengthens moral Obligations to *relative* Duties, which the Law of Nature requires, whether it be toward Believers or Unbelievers, or toward *Jewish* or *Gentile*-Converts, that may have different Sentiments as to some religious Principles and Practices; So believing Women among you, that are in a married State, ought to behave in a meek and submissive Manner toward their own lawful Husbands, as far as they can do it with a safe Conscience, and as is consistent with their superior Relation to the Lord Jesus, and becoming their Christian-Character. (See the Note on *Eph.* v. 21.)

19 *Husbands, love your Wives, and be not bitter against them.*

19. On the other Hand, those of you, that bear the Relation of Husbands, ought to treat your Wives with all Tenderness, Kindness and Affection; to delight in their Company, and do all that in you lies, for their temporal and spiritual Ease, Comfort and Happiness; and not to exercise a severe and arbitrary Lordship over them, or break out

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into furious and passionate Expressions against them, or use them ill by Words or Blows, or go about to lay any Hardships upon them, that would be grievous to them.

20 *Children, obey* your *Parents in all Things: For this is well-pleasing unto the Lord.*

20. Let those of you, who are Sons or Daughters, remember that your natural Obligations remain in full Force to your Parents, whether Fathers or Mothers, *Jews* or *Gentiles*, Christians or Heathens; and ye ought accordingly to make Conscience of paying all filial Duty to them, in Obedience to their just and reasonable Commands in every thing, that is lawful for Parents to enjoin, and for Children to do *: For this is agreeable to the Will of Christ, and acceptable to God through him.

21 *Fathers, provoke not your Children* to Anger, *lest they be discouraged.*

21. On the other Side, it ought to be the conscientious and tender Care of those of you that are Parents, whether Fathers or Mothers, (see the Note on *Eph.* vi. 4) that ye study the Tempers of your Children, and endeavour to establish your Authority over them, and allure them to their Duty, by prudent, kind and gentle Methods, and never sower their Minds by furious or opprobrious Languge, nor by unreasonable Impositions, or unmerciful Corrections, to irritate their angry Passions: Take heed of all such harsh Treatment, (ἵνα μὴ ἀθυμῶσι) that their Spirits may not be broke, and they dishearten'd, and filled with Prejudice both against yourselves and against the Gospel, which ye profess, but are far from recommending by such an ill Temper and Behaviour toward them.

22 *Servants, obey in all Things* your *Masters according to the Flesh; not with Eye-service, as Men-pleasers, but in Singleness of Heart, fearing God:*

22. As to those of you, that are Servants, or even Bondslaves, whether to Christians or Heathens, that are your lawful Masters in Things pertaining to the Body and temporal Affairs, Ye ought to be very diligent and faithful in executing the Trusts and doing the Business they commit to you, and in making their Interest your own, and fulfilling all their Commands, as far as they don't interfere with your Duty toward your higher Master in Heaven, relating to the Concerns of Religion, and of your own Souls: (See the Note on *ver.* 20) And ye ought cheerfully to attend to their Service, not merely while ye are under their Eye, as Persons that seek only to approve yourselves to Men, and gain their Favour; but in the Sincerity of your Hearts at all Times, as in the Sight and Presence of the All-seeing

* *In all Things* must be understood here, with regard to *Children*, and *ver.* 22 with regard to *Servants*, under a Limitation to *all lawful Things*: For it could not be the Duty of Christian Children, or Servants, to obey their Heathen-Parents, or Masters, were they to command them to renounce their Faith in Christ, and Profession of his Name, and to worship Idols, or commit any other Iniquity; nor could it be the Duty of those, that were led into the Liberty of the Gospel, to obey their Parents, or Masters, in case they should command them to observe the Rites and Ceremonies of the *Mosaic* Law: And therefore as *Wives* are to submit themselves to their Husbands, only so far as is *fit in the Lord*; (ver. 18) so *Servants* are to obey their Masters according to the Flesh, (*ver.* 22) only in Things that relate to the Body and civil Concerns, or that their own Consciences approve of in Religion.

God, and as Persons that act from a Principle of Conscience towards him, and are most of all concern'd to be approved of him in all your Ways, and to do nothing that is offensive to him, whether any one else be present to observe you, or not.

23 *And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto Men.*

23. And whatever Service ye are called to engage in, it ought to be, not merely by Constraint, much less with Grudging or Reluctance; but with a willing and ready Mind, from a Sense of Duty toward the Lord Jesus, in Obedience to his Commands, and for his Honour and Glory, as ye are Professors of his Name; and not from a selfish mercenary Spirit, that aims at only pleasing Men.

24 *Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the Reward of the Inheritance. For ye serve the Lord Christ.*

24. To excite and encourage you to all Cheerfulness and Fidelity herein, ye ought to be firmly persuaded, and seriously to consider, that whatsoever Ill Treatment, and unrighteous Returns, ye may meet with, instead of a suitable Reward from your Masters on Earth, ye shall receive a gracious Reward of the heavenly Inheritance from the Lord, the great Judge of all, at the last Day; and so ye (though Servants) shall be dealt with as Sons and Heirs of God, and Joint-Heirs with Christ: For in doing your Duty to earthly Masters, ye really pay Honour and Service to the Lord Jesus himself, who is the best of all Masters, whose Providence has placed you in that State of Servitude, and whose Word requires a becoming Behaviour answerable to it, that *ye may adorn the Doctrine of God your Saviour in all Things*, (Tit. ii. 10.)

25 *But he that doeth Wrong shall receive for the Wrong which he hath done: And there is no Respect of Persons.*

25. But he that is guilty of any Injustice, whether, as a Servant, in neglecting his Master's Business, or purloining his Goods; or, as a Master, in rendering Evil for Good, or with-holding what is due to his Servant, shall receive a just and impartial Recompence of Reward for all his iniquitous Doings: (*Heb.* ii. 2) For in the Judgment of the great Day, our blessed Lord will not be biassed by any external Circumstances, nor make any Difference between Masters and Servants, Bond or Free, in Favour of one, or in Prejudice to the other, on Account of the different Relations they bear one to another in this World; but he will pass a righteous Sentence upon all, according to the Evidence that shall arise for or against them, from their moral and religious Characters, whatsoever their civil Station has been upon Earth. (See the Note on *Eph.* vi. 8.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

With what Elevation of Soul should they, that are risen with Christ, follow their ascended Saviour from Earth to his exalted State in Heaven, where he lives for them, and is the Source and Security of spiritual Life to them, and will at length give them an illustrious Appearance with himself, in all possible Glory! He has already made a happy Change upon them, who were once disobedient, and lived and walked in such a sinful Course, as exposed them to divine Wrath; but, by the Efficacy of regenerating Grace, they have now discarded the whole

whole Body of Sin, with all its Members; and have assumed a new Form in Knowledge and Righteousness according to the holy Image of God, in which he at first created Man. O blessed Dispensation of Gospel-Grace, in which believing *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and People of all Ranks in outward Privileges and worldly Circumstances, are one Body, and equally Partakers of all spiritual Blessings in Christ, who is all in the whole of their Salvation that are the chosen and beloved of God! How powerful and engaging are their Obligations to mortify every sinful Propension of Body and Mind; to lay aside all wrathful Dispositions of Heart, and all blasphemous, unseemly, false and deceitful Expressions of the Lips; to be clothed with the tenderest Compassion and Humility, Patience and Forbearance one towards another; and to be of a forgiving Spirit to those that have offended them, in Imitation of, and as influenced by, the infinitely greater Forgiveness, that Christ has extended to themselves! And O with what Beauty, Harmony and Union, would Christians shine, were they to cultivate mutual Love, and study the Things that make for Peace, under a governing Sense of God's being reconciled to them; and were their Hearts inlarged in Gratitude and Praise, and inriched with all spiritual Wisdom, and every Grace, for their own and others Edification, in singing the Honours of Christ's Name, and in adorning their holy Profession, by doing every thing, in Word and Deed, with a Dependence on him, and in Obedience to his Authority over them! This is the best Way of shewing forth their Thankfulness to God the Father, thro' Jesus Christ, for all the Benefits he has bestowed upon them. And as ever they would acquit themselves with Honour to their holy Profession, they should make Conscience of fulfilling the natural and civil Duties of their various Relations in the present Life. Wives should behave with due Subjection to their Husbands in all things, that are fit and proper for them, as Members of Christ: And Husbands should be affectionately tender toward their Wives, and labour against every thing that might make them uncomfortable. Children ought readily to obey their Parents in all their lawful Commands, as ever they would fulfil their Duty toward them according to the Will of God: And Parents should take heed of discouraging their Children by any severe Treatment of them. Servants, considering themselves as continually under God's Eye, should always attend to their Master's Business, with as much Cheerfulness and Fidelity in their Absence, as in their Presence; and should do every Thing from a Principle of Religion, as being desirous of pleasing God, rather than Men; and as being assured, that, in doing the Duties of their Stations, they serve the Lord Christ; and that he will graciously honour them with the Reward of an eternal Inheritance. And O what an awful Check would it be upon all Iniquity, were we to consider, that the righteous Judge of all, who has no Respect to any one's outward Condition in this World, will most certainly render Vengeance to them, that practise unrighteous Dealings with others!

CHAP. IV.

The Apostle exhorts Masters to do their Duty toward Servants, 1. *Recommends to Persons of all Ranks the general Duties of Perseverance in Prayer, and Christian-Prudence in Behaviour and Speech,* 2—6. *Refers them to* Tychicus *and* Onesimus, *for an Account of the State of his Affairs,* 7—9. *Sends Salutations from several by Name, together with his own; and, adding a Charge to* Archippus, *concludes with his usual Benediction,* 10—18.

TEXT.

1 MAsters, give unto your *Servants that which*

PARAPHRASE.

1. AS Christian-Servants ought to be obedient to their Masters in all lawful Things; (*Chap.* iii. 24*) so those of you that stand in the Relation of Masters, ought

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* As this Verse concludes the Exhortations to *relative* Duties, it might have been much better joined to the *Third*, than made the Beginning of the *Fourth* Chapter. And then the last Verse of the Third Chapter would the more easily be consider'd as referring to *Masters*, as well as *Servants*.

is juſt and equal, knowing that ye alſo have a Maſter in Heaven.

not to think yourſelves lawleſs, or at Liberty to treat any of your Servants in an arbitrary tyrannical Way; no, not even ſuch as may be Slaves and Heathens: But ye ſhould deal juſtly and equitably with them, in taking good Care of them, not with-holding their Wages, or any proper Proviſions, according to their Wants, and your Contracts with them; (*Jam.* v. 4) nor ought ye to lay any more Burdens, or harder Services upon them, than they are well able to bear; nor to be ſevere in your Threatnings and Puniſhments, beyond their Deſerts; nor backward to give ſuitable Encouragements to Fidelity in your Service; as ſeriouſly conſidering that ye yourſelves, as well as they, are under the Command of, and accountable to your great Lord and Maſter in Heaven, who continually obſerves you, and is infinitely more above you, than any of you can be above the meaneſt of them; and will deal with you in the great Day according to your Dealings with them. (*Chap* iii. 25.)

2 Continue in Prayer, and watch in the ſame with Thankſgiving.

2. To proceed to the Duties, that are incumbent, not only on Maſters, but upon you all; Whatſoever be your Relations in Life *, ye ought to be conſtant, at ſet Seaſons, in daily Prayer to the God of all Grace, in the Name of Chriſt, and by the Aſſiſtance of his Spirit, for perſonal and relative, public and private, temporal and ſpiritual Bleſſings, whether in the Cloſet, Family, or religious Aſſemblies, as there may be Opportunity; and to watch for all ſpecial Calls of Providence, and needful Aſſiſtances from above, that ye may be continually ready to engage in this Duty, and perſevere in it, tho' ye may not immediately ſee the Anſwers of your Prayers: Ye ſhould alſo watch againſt all Hindrances, that would interfere with this Duty, and againſt all Deadneſs in your own Spirits, that there may be no Indifference, Trifling, or Wanderings in performing it: And always take care that, with Supplications for the Mercies ye need, grateful Praiſes and cheerful Thankſgivings to God be joined for what he has favour'd you with, relating to this World, and that which is to come. (*Phil.* iv. 6.)

3 Withal, praying alſo for us, that God would open unto us a Door of Utterance, to ſpeak the Myſtery of Chriſt, for which I am alſo in Bonds:

3. And in all your Addreſſes to the Throne of Grace, I earneſtly beſeech you to be in a ſpecial Manner mindful of me and *Timothy*, (Chap. i. 1) and other Brethren, that labour with us in the Word and Doctrine; praying that God would give us Opportunity, and enable us with Liberty of Spirit and Expreſſion, and with Faith and Boldneſs, to lay open the deep Things of God, and *preach the un-*

* If *continue in Prayer* be conſider'd in Connection with the preceding Verſe, which ſpeaks of *Maſters giving to their Servants that which is juſt and equal*, it intimates that one Part of the Duty of Chriſtian-Maſters is to pray daily with, and for their Servants; and to be concern'd for, and do what in them lies to take care of their *Souls*, as well as *Bodies*, and to bring them into a Compliance with a holy Reſolution, like that of *Joſhuah*, (Chap. xxiv. 15) *As for me, and my Houſe, we will ſerve the Lord.* However, this and the following Exhortations, certainly include Maſters, and all other profeſſing Chriſtians, whatever their civil Stations be in the World.

ſearchable

searchable Riches of Christ among the Gentiles, (*Ephes.* iii. 8.) for the doing of which, I am, even now, a Prisoner in Bonds.

4 That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.

4. I beg your Prayers particularly for me, in my present confined and afflicted Circumstances, that, as far as Providence shall favour me with Opportunities for it, I may be eminently assisted in setting forth the Redeemer's Glory, and the whole Counsel of God, in such a free, extensive, plain and open Manner, and with such a Frame of Spirit as becomes me, and as the Duty of my Office and the Importance of the Subject call for.

5 Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.

5. As to your own Behaviour in the World, See that the whole of your Conversation be managed with all Circumspection, and Christian-Prudence, towards Unbelievers, and all that are without the Pale of the visible Church, that ye may not be defiled by them; but may be useful and exemplary to them, and win upon them, and never give them any Occasion to think, or speak Evil of the Doctrines and Ways of the Lord: And, in this Manner, labour to improve every Opportunity of filling up the Duties of your respective Stations; of doing Good to your very Enemies, and of preventing such Offences, as might provoke them to raise Persecutions against you, and thereby shorten your Days, or cut you off from further Services to Christ and his Cause. (See *Ephes.* v. 15, 16.)

6 Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

6. With the like important Views, Take heed that your Discourse, on all Occasions, be as becomes Persons, whose Hearts are season'd with Grace, and whose Language tends to recommend the Grace of God, and promote a gracious Spirit in others; and so is preserved from Corruption, (as Meat is kept wholesome, and free from Putrefaction, by the Salt that cures and seasons it, and makes it savoury) that ye may know how to give a good Account of the Reason of the Hope that is in you, with Modesty, Meekness and Wisdom; (1 *Pet.* iii. 15.) and how to answer scrupulous Doubts, and serious Enquiries on one Hand, and perverse Cavillings and captious Objections, on the other, with respect to Points of Christian-Faith, Duty and Experience, to every one that would propose any proper Question to you about them.

7 All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister, and fellow-servant in the Lord:

7. As to what concerns myself, and the Situation of my Affairs, both with respect to outward Circumstances, and inward Supports and Refreshments, which I know ye would be glad to hear of, I have ordered *Tychicus*, who brings this Epistle, to relate them to you at large, by Word of Mouth: And ye may depend upon the Account he will give you of them; he being a dearly beloved Brother in the Faith and Fellowship of the Gospel, and a conscientious, faithful Minister of Christ, and diligent Fellow-labourer with me in the Work of the Lord.

8 Whom I have sent unto you for the

8. And, being as desirous to know how Matters stand with you, as ye can be to hear how it fares with me, I have

sent

same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts;

sent him with a special Design, that he may get a thorough Insight into the Sate of your religious Concerns, in order to his reporting it to me; and that he may administer Relief and Comfort to you, under all your Trials, both by good Counsel, and by acquainting you with the remarkable Appearances of God's standing by me, and with the Success of my preaching the Gospel, even in my Bonds.

9 *With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things which* are done *here.*

9. For which Purpose, I have also joined with him *Onesimus*, who, whatsoever he formerly were, is now, through the wonderful Power of divine Grace, become a sincere and dearly beloved Brother in Christ; * and who, being one of your own City, and now a real Convert, may be the more welcome, and acceptable to you. These two faithful Brethren will give you a just and particular Account of every Thing that passes here at *Rome*, and in this Neighbourhood, relating to my Sufferings, and Supports, and Behaviour under them, and to what God is still doing by, and for me.

10 *Aristarchus my fellow prisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas (touching whom ye received commandments. If he come unto you, receive him)*

10. *Aristarchus* the *Macedonian*, who was exposed to great Danger for my Sake, (*Acts* xix. 29.) and is now a Prisoner with me at *Rome*, desires to be affectionately remember'd to you all; (See the Note on *Rom* xvi. 3.) as doth *John Mark*, Nephew to *Barnabas*, my old Friend and Collegue in apostolic Labours: (*Acts* xiii. 2, 3, 4, &c.) And if this his near Kinsman should come to *Colosse*, † I desire that ye would receive him in the most friendly Manner, and treat him with all Christian-respect and Kindness, according to the Recommendations ye have already had, and are now given of him, as worthy of it.

11 *And Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision. These only* are my *fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me.*

11. Another of my Fellow-labourers also, who goes by two Names, one of which in *Greek* is *Jesus*, which answers to that of *Joshua* in *Hebrew*, and the other in *Latin* is *Justus*, signifying *Just*. This upright Man joins with the other two in Christian-Salutations. All these, tho' *Jewish* Converts, bear the sincerest Respect to you, without the least Prejudice against any of you, on Account of your being *Gentile*-Believers; ‖ and they are the only Ministers

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* *Onesimus* was that Runagate, that had elop'd from his Master *Philemon*, and purloin'd his Goods; but, straying to *Rome*, was converted by the Apostle *Paul* there. (See for an Acconnt of him in the Epistle to *Philemon*, with the Paraphrase and Notes upon it) He was of the City of *Colosse*, and some think he, by this Time, was a Member of that Church; and others, that he was employed in the Work of the Ministry.

† *Mark* had before this Time regain'd an Interest in the Apostle's Affection and Confidence, notwithstanding the great Displeasure he formerly had against him, for leaving him and *Barnabas* at *Pamphilia*; (*Acts* xv. 38, 39.) which shews the Excellence of the Apostle's forgiving Spirit. This *Mark* is supposed to have been the Writer of the Gospel that bears his Name.

‖ The Apostle *Peter* is not mentioned with those of the Circumcision, that sent their Salutations, and are said to be the only Fellow-workers of the *Jewish* Sort, and a Comfort to the Apostle *Paul*. 'Tis therefore certain that either *Peter* was not then at *Rome*, or that he acted very unworthy of his Character.

of that Denomination, that are with me, and have joined their Labours with mine, during my Confinement, in helping forward the Work of the Lord, by preaching the same Gospel with myself, unto the Propagation and Enlargement of the Kingdom of Grace, which God has set up, under the Gospel-dispensation, in this World, in order to its being perfected in all its Felicities and Glories, in the World to come. These have been of great Use and Comfort to me by this Means, as well as by their agreeable Company, and various Assistances and Reliefs under all my Sufferings for Christ.

12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect, and complete in all the will of God.

12. To these I must add some others of the *Gentile*-Sort, to whom ye are very dear; as particularly *Epaphras*, who is not only a *Gentile*-Convert, but one of your own City, much devoted to your Service, and a faithful Minister of Jesus Christ, (See the Note *Phil.* ii. 25.) sends his sincere Respects to you; and shews how much he has you upon his Heart, by his constantly remembering you at the Throne of Grace, and labouring with great Earnestness and Fervor, as it were to an Agony, (αγωνιζομενος) in his Wrestlings with God in Prayer for you, that ye may continue stedfast in the Faith, as complete Christians, that are fully instructed in the Doctrines and Duties of the Gospel, and eminent in your Conformity to them, like perfect Men in Christ; being (πεπληρωμενοι) fill'd with his Light and Grace, according to the utmost Extent of that Revelation, which God has made of his Mind and Will, and in such a Manner, as may be every Way acceptable to him.

13 For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.

13. For I must needs bear Witness to this excellent laborious Brother, from what I have observed of him, and heard from his own Mouth, that he is zealously solicitous for your present and eternal Happiness; and has a like warm and tender Concern for the Prosperity of your two neighbouring Churches, * one of which is seated at *Laodicea*, and the other at *Hierapolis*, a large and populous City of *Phrygia*.

14 Luke the beloved physician and Demas greet you.

14. The Evangelist *Luke*, who was brought up for a Physician, but is now a dear Brother in the Lord, devoting himself intirely to his Service, for healing the spiritual Distempers of perishing Souls; and *Demas*, another ministring Servant, join in sending their Christian-Respects. (See the Note on 2 *Tim.* iv. 10.)

15 Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nym-

15. Let my own hearty Love be presented to those Brethren in Christ, that belong to the Church at *Laodicea*; and in a very particular Manner, to the well-known *Nymphas* † and

* 'Tis probable that *Epaphras* had been remarkably instrumental in forming, or building up these Churches; and therefore had a peculiar Affection to, and Concern for them.

† We know no more of *Nymphas*, than what is here said of him; but he seems to have been a noted Man of eminent Piety, and strict Religion in the Orders of his Christian-Family. (See the Note on *Rom.* xvi. 5.)

phas, and the church which is in his house.

his Christian-Family, which for its Regularity, Purity, religious Worship and Order, under his Conduct, is like a new Testament-Church.

16 *And when this epistle is read amongst you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.*

16. And 'tis my express Order that, after this Epistle shall have been distinctly read through, according to my Design, in a public Manner among you, the Church at *Colosse*, ye take Care that, either it, or an exact Copy of it, be sent to, and also read in the Church, that usually meets for the Worship of God at *Laodicea* ‖; and that a certain *Laodicean*-Letter be likewise communicated to, and publicly read among you.

17 *And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.*

17. All that I have further to add for your Direction is, that, as ye are surrounded with subtil Adversaries who seek to pervert you; (*Chap.* ii. 8.) ye would, in a prudent, friendly and respectful Manner, admonish *Archippus*, a ministring Servant among you, (See the Note on *Philem.* v. 2.) and remind him of the great Need there is of his utmost Vigilance, saying, We entreat you, dear Sir, always to bear upon your Heart the excellent Nature, Design and Importance of, and to lay yourself out, in the Name and Strength of Christ, with all Wisdom, Diligence and Faithfulness, in discharging that sacred Office, which you have been honoured with, by the Favour and Authority of the Lord Jesus, and for his Glory, that you may explain, confirm, vindicate and enforce the great Doctrines of divine Revelation, and exemplify them in your own Spirit and Conduct; may reprove Sin, and confute Error; may carefully fill up the Duties of your Trust in their whole Extent, and persevere therein all your Days, to the Comfort of your own and others Souls; and may do all that in you lies for the Furtherance of the Gospel, in the Conversion of Sinners, and Edification of the Saints.

18 *The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen.*

18. To conclude after my usual Manner in all my Epistles to the Churches, (See the Note on *Rom.* xvi. 22.) I subjoin my best Wishes to you all, in my own Hand-Writing: And to give this, together with all that has been said in the above Letter, the greater Weight with you, as also to engage your most earnest Prayers for me, Remember it comes from an Apostle, who is now suffering with Cheerfulness and Patience in Bonds, for preaching the Gospel to you *Gentiles*; (Ephes. iii. 1.) and who affectionately prays, that the free Favour of God, the Father, Son and Spirit, (2 *Cor.* xiii. 14.) and all its precious Fruits, Mani-

‖ Various have been the Conjectures about this Epistle, which is lost, unless it were that, which some very improbably have supposed the Apostle wrote from *Laodicea* to the *Ephesians*: It rather seems not to have been any Epistle wrote by him, but wrote to him from *Laodicea*, relating to the State of Affairs there, and in neighbouring Churches, which, perhaps might give Occasion to, and cast some Light upon this Epistle to the *Colossians*; and therefore might be proper to be read in the Church at *Colosse*, which, doubtless, knew what Epistle is here referred to.

festations and Effects, in a Work of Grace here, and in Glory hereafter, may abound toward you. In Testimony of my Sincerity in this Benediction, and of my Hope that it will be fully answered, I say, *Amen*.

RECOLLECTIONS.

With what Equity, Mildness and Mercy would Masters treat their Servants, were they deeply impressed with the Thought, that they themselves have a greater Master in Heaven, to whom they must give an Account of all their Behaviour toward those, that are under them! And O what Need is there of daily Prayers, with Thanksgivings, in the Family and Closet, for ourselves and others; and particularly for Christ's ministring Servants, that they may be wise and faithful, courageous and successful, in unfolding the Mysteries of the Gospel, without Restraint from their Adversaries! And what Need have Christians of Wisdom from above, to behave prudently towards Unbelievers, that they, by Word and Deed, may recommend Religion to them, and make a proper Apology on all Occasions for it! With what Pleasure should Ministers own, and speak well of their faithful Fellow-labourers, and Fellow-sufferers, of every Denomination! With what earnest Wrestlings (as all our Prayers ought to be) at the Throne of Grace should they plead for such Churches especially, as they are most immediately concerned with, that they may be confirmed in the whole Will of God! What a tender sympathizing Spirit should they have, and shew toward them! How cordially should they salute all the Saints, and particularly those, who are eminent for Godliness, and under whose Conduct their Families are lively Emblems of a Church of Christ! And how cheerfully should they recommend it to them, to maintain and express the like affectionate Wishes one for another! The holy Scriptures are written for their Use; they have a common Interest and Concern in them, and ought carefully to read them, and to be solicitous that they, who minister in sacred Things, may be faithful in the Discharge of the Trust that Christ has committed to them; and when any of them are in Bonds for the Gospel's Sake, How ought Churches to lay it to Heart, that they may be enabled to make suitable Improvements of such a Providence, for their own Establishment in the Truth, to which those noble Confessors bear their Testimony with Faith and Patience! For these and all other valuable Purposes, May Grace, the Fountain of all Good, be with them, that love the Lord Jesus Christ in Sincerity and Truth! *Amen*.

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF THE *First* Epistle of the Apostle PAUL to the *THESSALONIANS.*

In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The Preface to the *First* Epistle to the THESSALONIANS.

THESSALONICA, which signifies the Victory of *Thessalia*, being rebuilt by the famous *Philip* of *Macedon*, was so called in Memory of the Conquest he obtained over the *Thessalians*, and was the Metropolis of *Macedonia.* The Church gathered there consisted of Converts, partly from among the *Jews* and Proselytes of the Gate, as appears from *Acts* xvii. 4; and partly from among the idolatrous *Gentiles*, as appears from *Chap.* i. 9 of this Epistle. They were exceeding dear to the Apostle *Paul*, as eminent Seals of his Ministry, which had been lately bless'd to their Conversion; and he was tenderly and solicitously concern'd for them; because, soon afterwards, he was violently driven away from them, all of a sudden, through the furious Assaults of the unbelieving *Jews*, *Acts* xvii. 1—10, which prevented his ministring at *Thessalonica*, so long as he could have wish'd, for their further Establishment in the Faith.

He was very desirous to have return'd to them, and attempted it once and again; but Satan by his wicked Instruments hinder'd him, as he tells us, *Chap.* ii. 18; and, fearing lest that busy Adversary might have unsettled them, he sent *Timothy* to them; and, upon his Return with comfortable Tidings of their State, wrote this Epistle to encourage their continuing to stand fast in the Faith, and not to be stumbled at the Tribulations, that besel him for the Gospel's Sake, as in other Places, so while he was among them.

This is *the first* of all the Epistles that he wrote, which, as is supposed, was about the Year of our Lord 52; and 'tis generally agreed that he sent it, not from *Athens*, as the Postscript says; but from *Corinth*, about a Year after he had been at *Thessalonica*.

He begins it with a Salutation, and affectionate Thanksgiving to God for his distinguishing Grace, as it was evidently manifested in its remarkable Effects upon them,

them, *Chap.* i. And to induce them to persevere in the Faith, which they had received, he reminds them of his own unblameable Behaviour, together with his Labours and Sufferings, and the Success of his Ministry among them; and expresses his earnest Desire of visiting them again, out of his great Love to them, whom he looked upon as his Hope, and Joy, and Crown of rejoicing, *Chap.* ii. But as he could not go himself, he, in his tender Care for them, sends *Timothy* to see how Matters stood with them, and to comfort them under their Tribulations, and establish them in the Faith; and when *Timothy* returned and gave a good Account of them, it revived his Soul, and he heartily pray'd, that, if it were the Will of God, he might have an Opportunity of making them another Visit; but, whether this might be so order'd by Providence, or not, that the Lord would establish them in Faith, Love and Holiness, *Chap.* iii. And, lest he should not be able to see them again, he refers them to the Directions he had given, while he was with them, to guard them against all Iniquity, and particularly against every Kind of Uncleanness; commends them for their brotherly Love, and intreats them to abound therein yet more and more, and to acquit themselves with Diligence and Honour in the Duties of their several Stations: And, to comfort them under the Loss of their deceased Christian-Friends, he sets before them the blissful State, to which they shall be raised, when all the Saints, both living and dead, shall meet together to be with Christ at his coming to judge the World, *Chap.* iv. And as the particular Time of Christ's coming to Judgment is unknown, and will be on a sudden, at unawares, though certain in its Season, he exhorts them to constant Watchfulness, and Preparation for it; and then adds some Admonitions, relating to their decent Behaviour toward those, that were set over them in the Lord, and towards all they had to do with; suggesting also several other important Duties, in which they were all concern'd: And concludes with an excellent Prayer for them, and earnest Desire of theirs for himself; and with Salutations, and a Charge that this Epistle be read in their Church, with whom he leaves his Benediction, *Chap.* v.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

The Apostle salutes the Church at Thessalonica, *and blesses God for them, in Reflection on their Faith, Love and Patience, as evident Tokens of their Election, which was manifested in the efficacious Manner, with which the Gospel came to them*; 1—5. *And describes its powerful, exemplary and famous Effects upon their Hearts and Lives*, 6—10.

TEXT.

1 PAUL, *and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the Church of the Thessalonians*, which is *in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace* be *unto you, and Peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

PARAPHRASE.

PAUL *, together with *Silas* and *Timothy*, his Assistants in the Work of the Lord at *Thessalonica*, send greeting (See the Notes on *Acts* xv. 22, and 1 *Cor.* i. 1) to the Church of Christ, which has lately been planted by means of our Ministry, (*Acts* xvii. 1—4, 14) and ordinarily assembles, for religious Worship and Discipline, at that renowned Metropolis of *Macedonia*, and consists of Believers in God the Father, as the only true God, in Distinction from the idolatrous *Gentiles*, who worship them, *which by Nature are no Gods*; (Gal. iv. 8) and of Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only true Messiah, (See the Notes on *John* xiv. 1, and xvii. 3) in Distinction from the unbelieving *Jews*, who deny him; and so we regard you as Persons, that are in Union, and have *Fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* (1 John i. 3.) May all the Riches of divine Love and Favour, which is the Fountain of every Blessing; and, as the Fruit of this, may all Manner of Prosperity, inclusive of every desirable Sort of Peace with God, and others, and in your own Souls, be multiplied abundantly to all and every one of you, according to the Scheme of Salvation, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only Mediator and Peace-maker, who has purchased all Blessings for us by his Blood; and freely communicates them to us by his Spirit, in an inseparable Concurrence with the Father. (See the Note on *Rom.* i. 7.)

2 *We give Thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our Prayers,*

2. We daily offer up our cheerful and solemn Thanks to God on behalf of your whole Church, and mention you in our stated and occasional Prayers with Gratitude and Praise, and with fervent Supplications for his perfecting all that concerns you;

* As these *Thessalonians* were the Seals of *Paul*'s Apostleship, and there were none among them, that pretended to dispute his Authority, or vie with him in it; there was no Occasion for his asserting it here, as he does in his Inscription of the Epistles to Churches, in which there were false Apostles, that would depreciate him, and set themselves up in Opposition to him: And, perhaps, as this was the first Epistle that he wrote, his great Modesty might restrain him from asserting his Apostolic Character, till he found a Necessity for it; because he humbly thought himself to be the *least of the Apostles, and not meet to be called an Apostle.* (1 Cor. xv. 9.)

3 Remembering, without ceasing, your Work of Faith, and Labour of Love, and Patience of Hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the Sight of God, and our Father;

3. Being excited hereunto by a constant habitual Sense, and frequent Recollection, of the unfeigned Faith, which God has wrought in you, and which shews itself to be, not a dead, but living Faith, by its genuine Operation unto all Evangelical Obedience: We have also a joyful Remembrance of your ardent Love to Christ, and to all that belong to him, which generously exerted itself in the great Pains ye took to succour and secure us, when we were in the utmost Danger at *Thessalonica*; (Acts xvii. 5—10) as also in performing every Office of Kindness one to another, and to all the Saints and Servants of Christ, for his Sake: And we reflect with Pleasure on the Fruits of this Faith and Love, as they have produced in you a lively Hope of eternal Life, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and *that* with patient Continuance in Well doing under all your Tribulations; and with a quiet Waiting for God's Time of crowning your Hopes with Enjoyment: (see *Heb.* x. 36) We can solemnly appeal to the all-seeing God, for the Sincerity of our Professions of Thankfulness, and constant Remembrance of you in our Prayers *; and are firmly persuaded that your Faith, Love and Hope are exercised with all Uprightness of Heart, as in the Sight and Presence of God, even your and our Father, who has made us his Children, by adopting and regenerating Grace.

4 Knowing, Brethren beloved, your Election of God.

4. From these peculiar and evident Fruits of God's distinguishing Favour to you, our dear Brethren beloved of the Lord, and of us for his Sake †, We, arguing from the Effect to the Cause, justly conclude, and ye yourselves

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* *In the Sight of God*, or *before God*, (εμπροσθεν του Θεου) may refer, either to the Apostle's *blessing God for, and affectionately remembring* the *Thessalonians*; or to *their Work of Faith and Labour of Love, and Patience of Hope*, according to the different Turns given to this Clause in the Paraphrase.

† According to the different Ways of pointing this Sentence in the *Greek*, (αδελφοι αγαπημενοι υπο Θεου την εκλογην υμων) *of God* may be joined either to *beloved*, or to *your Election*, which proceeded from the Free Love of God: And the Apostle's *knowing the Election* of these *Thessalonians* seems to have been, not by an immediate Revelation, but only in the ordinary Way of charitably judging about the Election of any Person whatsoever; for, in the Connection of this with the preceding and following Verses, he manifestly proves the Cause from its Effect, by which it may be known, and without which it's ordinarily impossible for any one to know it, with Reference either to himself, or others; since, who are God's Elect, is an intire Secret in his own Breast, till it appears by its distinguishing Effects. (See 2 *Pet*. i. 10.) But had our Apostle meant, as some would have it, that he knew God's Purpose of *receiving idolatrous Gentiles* into the Gospel-Church, by immediate Revelation, he had this Knowledge *before* the *Thessalonians* were converted, or effectually called; and therefore had no need of arguing from the Effect to the Cause to ascertain it. And as we must conclude from *Acts* xvii. 4, that this Church consisted, not only of idolatrous *Gentiles*, but also of *Jews* and *Proselytes* of the Gate, that were converted there, the *Election* here spoken of may well be supposed, not to be *national*, but to include Persons of all those former Characters; and to which ever of them the Gospel became effectual, it was *according to the Election of Grace*, or the *eternal Purpose of him, who worketh all Things after the Counsel of his own Will*. (Rom. xi. 5, and Ephes. i. 4.) And that the Election here intended was not barely to *outward Privileges*, but to *saving Benefits*, appears from the whole Current of the Context, which speaks of its peculiar, distinguishing and sanctifying Fruits, by means of the Gospel; (See the Note on *ver*. 5) and from the Apostle's like Thanksgiving to God, for his having, *from the Beginning, chosen them to Salvation through Sanctification of the Spirit*, (2 Epist. ii. 13) which is more than being chosen to a Belief of the Gospel.

may

may be well satisfied, in the same way, that ye were freely chosen *of God* from all Eternity *to Salvation, through Sanctification of the Spirit, and Belief of the Truth.* (2 Epist. ii. 13.)

5 For our Gospel came not unto you in Word only, but also in Power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much Assurance; as ye know what Manner of Men we were among you for your Sake.

5. For the Gospel, which was preached by me, and by *Silas* and *Timothy*, (v. 1.) my Fellow-labourers among you, did not only reach your Ears in the outward Publication of it, as it did the Ears of many others without any saving Effect; but was also attended with a divine Energy, which brought it home to your Hearts by the special Operation of the holy Spirit †, as well as was attested by the Miracles he wrought in Confirmation of its divine Authority; and so it begat an unshaken Satisfaction in your own Souls, as to its Truth and Importance; and *good Hope, through Grace,* (2 Epist. ii. 16.) as to your own personal Interest in its Blessings, by Means of what ye experienced of the great and excellent Fruits of our Ministry among you; in which (as ye well know) we laboured with great Plainness of Speech, Meekness and Patience, and evident Tokens of God's owning us, and giving us glorious Success; notwithstanding all the Violence and Persecution, that we endured on your Account, in our Love to you, and Concern for your Salvation.

6 And ye became Followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the Word in much Affliction, with Joy of the Holy Ghost:

6. And such were the happy Effects of the Gospel's coming in this powerful Manner to your Souls, that immediately hereupon ye became Imitators, (μιμηται) in Faith, Obedience and Patience, of us, who preached it, and *with whom ye consorted*; (Acts xvii. 4. See the Note there) and ye were therein Followers of our great Lord and Master himself, who is our only perfect Example, and in whose Steps we, and ye after us, trod; (1 *Cor.* xi. 1.) ye having firmly believed the Word of his Grace, even in the Midst of the severest Troubles, that both we and yourselves were exposed to for its Sake; (*Acts* xvii. 5—9.) and having received it with such inward Consolation of the holy Spirit, as made you a rich Amends for them, sweetly supported you under them, and enabled you to bear them with Christian-fortitude and Patience.

7 So that ye were Ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

7. So that ye yourselves became eminent, encouraging and exemplary Patterns (τυποι) of Faith, Patience and Holiness to all the Believers round about you, in the two large *Grecian* Provinces of *Macedonia* and *Achaia*, whether they were converted before you, as at *Philippi* in *Macedonia*; or

† *The Gospel's coming in Power and in the Holy Ghost* was more, than its coming with the Attestation of Miracles, as appears by its saving Effects: For the *Thessalonians* there upon *became Followers of the Apostles and of the Lord,* and were eminent Examples of Faith and Holiness; and the idolatrous *Gentiles* among them *turned from Idols to serve the living and true God,* with Hope in Christ *for Deliverance from the Wrath to come,* which carried an undeniable Proof of an effectual and saving Change upon their Hearts and Lives, by the Power of the Holy Ghost, with which the Gospel came to them, as is represented in the following Verses to the End of the Chapter.

after

after you, as at *Athens* and *Corinth* in *Achaia*, (See the Note on *v.* 8.)

8 *For from you sounded out the Word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every Place your Faith to God-ward is spread abroad, so that we need not to speak any Thing.*

8. For the Gospel, which is properly the Word of the Lord Jesus, as he is the Author and the main Subject of it, having had such glorious Success among you *, was published from thenceforward, with great Reputation and Advantage, and, as it were, with a loud Echo of its Praises, (ἐξήχηται) far and near; insomuch that the Fame of your Faith, as going out to, and terminating upon God in Christ, and manifested by its remarkably holy and exemplary Fruits in your Lives, (ἐξελήλυθεν) has gone forth, and is commonly talked of, not only in *Macedonia* and *Achaia*, but with still wider Extent in various other Places; so that we ourselves have no Occasion to say any Thing about it, as we otherwise should.

9 *For they themselves shew of us, what Manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from Idols, to serve the living and true God,*

9. For wherever we travel, we meet with People that are so full of it, as to anticipate us by beginning themselves to speak, with Wonder and Joy, of the happy Effects of our Ministry among you; as, particularly, they are ready to tell us what a cheerful Reception ye gave us, at our first coming among you, though it was in the most afflicted Circumstances; (*v.* 6.) and how, by Means of our preaching, ye were so effectually wrought upon, as that those of you, who were Heathens before, at once voluntarily and publickly renounced your former Idolatry, and turned away with Indignation and Abhorrence from all your fictitious Deities to him, who is by Nature God; believing in him, and yielding yourselves up intirely to him, to own, reverence, worship and adore, serve and glorify him, who has all Perfection of Life, Blessedness and Immortality, originally and essentially in, and of himself, and is the Fountain of all Sorts of Life, whether natural, spiritual, or eternal, to others; and is the only true God in Distinction from all mere Creatures whatsoever, though not to the Exclusion of the great Mediator, who is God, equally and together with the Father, in his original Nature, in whom ye are also brought to believe, (See the Notes on *John* xiv. 1. and xvii. 3.)

10 *And to wait for his Son from Heaven, whom he raised*

10. And to wait with Faith, Preparation and Patience, Desire and joyful Hope, under all present Sufferings, for the glorious appearing of the eternal Son of the Father from

* The Church of *Thessalonica*, I apprehend, was not the *Mother-church* of *Macedonia* and *Achaia*, where the *first* Converts were made, and from whence the Gospel was *first* propagated in those Provinces; as that at *Jerusalem* was of the *Jews*, and that at *Antioch* was of the *Gentiles*: For Converts were made at *Philippi* in *Macedonia* before those of *Thessalonica*, as appears from the 16th and 17th Chapters of the *Acts*. But the Gospel went from *Thessalonica* with the more evident and recommending Demonstrations of its Excellence and Power, on Account of its eminently wonderful Effects upon them, as appeared in their exemplary Behaviour.

from the dead, even *Jesus which delivered us from the Wrath to come.*

Heaven, †, who will come to *be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe our Testimony* concerning him; (2 *Thess.* i. 10.) even Jesus, the divine Saviour, who, by his Obedience and Sufferings unto Death purchased Redemption for us, and by his Almighty Power (ῥυόμενος) does, and finally will deliver us from the dreadful Wrath of an incensed God, that is coming apace, (ἐρχομένης) and will be ever incessantly coming, like a perpetual Torrent of flaming Vengeance, upon all the Unbelieving and Ungodly, to their everlasting Destruction, (2 *Thess.* i. 8, 9.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a distinguishing Mercy is it, when the Gospel comes to any of our Souls, not in Word only, but with the special impressive Power of the Holy Ghost! This is an evident Proof of our eternal Election, which can be known only by its Fruits; such as Faith, Love, and Patience under Sufferings for Christ's Sake; a thorough Conversion in Heart and Life from every Idol to the living and true God; a holy Imitation of Christ and of his Servants, as far as they follow him; and a hopeful Expectation of his glorious Coming to rid us of all our Troubles. And how desirable is it to have these Tokens of God's Love, and of the Efficacy of his Grace in an eminent Degree! Such receive his Word with full Assurance of its divine Truth, Excellence and Importance, and with Joy in the Holy-Ghost, notwithstanding all the Tribulations that may befal them for its Sake; they are a Credit to the Gospel, and noble Examples to other Believers; and are spoken of with Admiration and Joy to all that hear of them, and love the Truth, as it is in Jesus. With what Pleasure do his ministring Servants own one another, and reflect on every remarkable Success of their Labours, and on a Testimony in the Consciences of their Hearers, that the Power of the Spirit is with them! They affectionately salute the dear Converts; they abound in Thankfulness for them, and continually recommend them in their Prayers to the Grace and Blessing of God the Father, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, in every Remembrance of them. And O how animating to every true Believer is the Thought of the eternal Son of God, as the risen Jesus, who, having saved them from their Sins, delivered them from the Wrath to come.

CHAP. II.

The Apostle, to encourage their Progress in Faith and Holiness, reminds them of the Manner of his Preaching and Behaviour among them, 1—12. *And of their receiving the Gospel, as the Word of God, which effectually worked in them,* 13—16. *And assures them of his Joy on their Account, and his Desire of coming to them again,* 17—20.

TEXT.

1 FOR *yourselves, Brethren, know our Entrance in unto*

PARAPHRASE.

1. WELL may I speak of you, as I have, (*Ch.* i.) with the utmost Affection, Hope and Confidence: For I can appeal to your own Consciences, dear Brethren, that ye

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† As the first coming of Christ was the Object of the Faith, Desire and Hope of the *Old Testament* Church, *who waited for the Consolation of* Israel, *and looked for Redemption in* Jerusalem; (Luke ii. 25, 38.) so his second coming is of the *New*, who are *looking for the blessed Hope, and glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:* (Titus ii. 13.) They firmly believe that he will certainly come again, though they know not when; and therefore continue waiting for it with such Exercises of Grace, and Performances of Duty, as may best encourage their Hope, that when he *who is their Life shall appear, they shall also appear with him in Glory*, (Col. iii. 4.)

your-

you, that it was not in vain:

yourselves experimentally know the glorious Power and Effect of my coming, with *Silas* and *Timothy*, (Chap. i. 1.) to preach the Gospel to you; that it was not (κενη) about vain and unprofitable Things, nor with a mere empty Sound of Words; nor was it without good Fruit, which we were assured it would not be, as from God's Promise in general, (*Isa.* lv. 11) so especially from the extraordinary Manner, in which he called us to preach it in *Macedonia*, (Acts xvi. 9, 10) of which yours is the chief City; and therefore no ill Treatment, that we before had met with in that Province, could discourage our Hopes of better Success among you *.

2 But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the Gospel of God with much Contention.

2. But even, after we had lately endured the greatest Cruelties for the Gospel's Sake, before we could reach so far as you, and had been treated with the utmost Indignity, as ye well know we were at *Philippi*, another famous City of *Macedonia*; (Acts xvi. 23, 24) we were nevertheless animated with holy Resolution, with Liberty of Spirit and of Speech, and with undaunted Courage, (επαρρησιασαμεθα) in humble Dependence on our gracious God for Protection and Success, openly to publish the everlasting Gospel to you; which, not we, but God himself is the Author of, and we preach in his Name with mighty Zeal and Fervor of Spirit, as it were to a great Agony, (πολλω αγωνι) in striving for your Conversion, and against the furious Opposition, which the Unbelieving *Jews* there also made against us. (*Acts* xvii. 5, &c.)

3 For our Exhortation was *not of Deceit, nor of Uncleanness, nor in Guile;*

3. For our Address to you, whether in a Way of Exhortation to Duty, or of Consolation (παρακλησις) under Sufferings for Christ's Sake, was not by preaching any erroneous Doctrines, like the false Teachers, to seduce you, but the pure uncorrupted Gospel; nor was it by teaching any Principles that lead to Licentiousness, but to all Holiness in Heart and Life; nor was it by hypocritical Pretences of Piety and Zeal, and Love to you, for carrying on sinister Views to worldly Advantage, but in the Sincerity of our Hearts for the Glory of God, and the Good of your Souls: So that there was no Falshood or Impurity in the Matter, nor Insincerity or Selfishness in the Manner, of our Preaching.

4 But as we were allowed of God to be put in Trust with the Gospel, even so we speak not as pleasing

4. But as we were approved of God (δεδοκιμασμεθα) to be authorized and furnished for, and counted faithful to be intrusted with, a Dispensation of the Gospel, (1 *Tim.* i. 11, 12, and *Tit.* i. 3) as Stewards of the Mysteries of God; (1 *Cor.* iv. 1) even so, according to the Design of this ho-

* *But even* (αλλα και) that introduces the next Verse, requires some such Thought, as the Paraphrase has added, at the Close of this, relating to the Apostle's Hope of Success among the *Thessalonians*, and his not being intimidated by the severe Usage he had met with in other Parts of *Macedonia*. This preserves a good Connection, which is not otherwise easily to be discern'd; and therefore some suppose (without sufficient Grounds, as appears to me) that the Apostle there enters upon a new Head of Discourse.

Men, but God, which trieth our Hearts.

nourable and important Truſt, we publiſh it wherever we come, without any Alteration, but exactly as we received it from him; not in ſuch a Manner, as might be ſuited to the corrupt Taſte, Notions, or Fancies of Men, to tickle their Ears, gain their Applauſe, and gratify their Humours, Luſts and Paſſions, by propheſying ſmooth Things to them, or by concealing any neceſſary Doctrine; (*Acts* xx. 21, 27) but with all Purity and Sincerity, as may be beſt approved in the Sight of the great and holy God, (*Gal.* i. 10) who, we are ſenſible, ſearches and knows our Hearts. (*Rev.* ii. 23.)

5 *For neither at any Time uſed we flattering Words, as ye know, nor a Cloke of Covetouſneſs; God is Witneſs.*

5. For we never, in dealing with any Sort of People, made uſe of fawning Speeches to ingratiate ourſelves with them, or flatter them with Compliments, or with vain Hopes of Salvation in a Courſe of Sin, Impenitence and Unbelief, or upon the Foot of their own Strength and Righteouſneſs, as ye yourſelves can teſtify from all that ye have ſeen, or heard of our Conduct, and Manner of Preaching; nor did we ever put on a Cloke, or falſe Pretence of Religion, to cover, and ſet a Gloſs upon ſecret Deſigns of making an Advantage of you, like thoſe falſe Teachers, who through *Covetouſneſs, with feigned Words, make a Merchandiſe* of their Hearers; (2 Pet. ii. 3) no, we can ſolemnly appeal to the heart-ſearching God for the Truth of this.

6 *Nor of Men ſought we Glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdenſome, as the Apoſtles of Chriſt.*

6. Nor were we ever ambitious of Vain-glory, or of ſeeking the Honour that comes from Man only, after the Example of thoſe, that tread in the Steps of the Scribes and Phariſees: (*John* v. 44, and xii. 43) We never contrived, intended, or endeavoured to be admired, careſſed and applauded, while we were either among you, or any other People that we have miniſtred to*; no, nor did we aſſume a high Tone of Authority, nor ſeek after the Honour of a Maintenance at your Expence, leſt ſome ſhould have thought it a burdenſome Tax upon them, though we might have inſiſted upon it, as the Apoſtles of Chriſt, and Servants ſent forth by him, who ſaid, *The Labourer is worthy of his Hire.* (Luke x. 7. See alſo 2 *Cor.* Chap. ix. and the Notes there.)

7 *But we were gentle among you, even as a Nurſe cheriſheth her Children:*

7. But, on the contrary, we behaved with all Humility of Mind, Modeſty, Meekneſs and Gentleneſs among you, and with ſuch Self-denial, as might beſt ſhow our parental Care and Concern for your ſpiritual Benefit; even as a tenderly affectionate nurſing Mother ſuckles her beloved Infants, nouriſhes them in her Boſom, bears with their Weakneſs and Frowardneſs, and does all ſhe can for their Eaſe, Help and Comfort.

* As *Maintenance* is a Part of the *Honour* that is to be paid to Miniſtring Servants, (See the Note on 1 *Tim.* v. 17, 18) it ſeems to me, though the Word here uſed be different, to be included alſo in the *Glory*, which the Apoſtle did not ſeek of the *Theſſalonians*, or other Churches: For his adding, with Reference hereunto, *when we might have been burdenſome*, plainly leads our Thoughts to his having waved the Right of Maintenance, which he might have claimed.

8. We

8 *So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the Gospel of God only, but also our own Souls, because ye were dear unto us.*

8. We in like Manner, being affectionately desirous of your Edification and Salvation, took great Pleasure, (ευδοκουμεν) not only in communicating unto you the Gospel of the Grace of God, and distributing suitable Portions of it in due Season to you, as to *new-born Babes, who desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that ye might grow thereby*; (1 Pet. ii. 2) but also in drawing out our own Souls with Compassion toward you, (*If.* lviii. 10) in abundant Labours, even to the exhausting of our Strength and Spirits, and cheerfully hazarding our Lives, which we were ready to lay down for your Sakes; because ye were exceeding dear to us, who have your spiritual and eternal Concerns intirely at Heart.

9 *For ye remember, Brethren, our Labour and Travel. For labouring Night and Day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the Gospel of God.*

9. In Proof of this, I need only remind you, my beloved Brethren, who can't have forgot how I, and my Companions, laid ourselves out in the most fatiguing and painful Services, while we were among you: For ye very well know, that we not only spent our Strength in ministerial Labours; but, when we were not employed in them, we work'd early and late at our secular Callings to get our own Livelihood, being unwilling to take Contributions from any of you for a Maintenance, that we might not seem burdensome; but might preach the Gospel of the Grace of God at Free Cost, and thereby cut off all Occasions from our Adversaries, who would fain reproach us, as though we wanted to make a Gain of you. (See the Note on 1 *Cor.* ix. 1.)

10 *Ye* are *Witnesses, and God* also, *how holily, and justly, and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:*

10. We can appeal to your own Consciences to witness for us, as far as ye have been capable of observing our Deportment; and, which is still greater, and more abundantly to our Satisfaction, we can solemnly appeal to the all-seeing and Heart-searching God, who knows our Principles, Motives and Ends, as well as our external Acts, that we exercised ourselves in a conscientious Discharge of all the Duties of Religion toward God, and of Righteousness toward Men; and in such a sober, humble, benevolent and inoffensive Manner, in the whole of our Conversation, as might best recommend the good Ways of the Lord among you, that were brought to the Faith of Christ by means of our Ministry.

11 *As you know, how we exhorted and comforted, and charged every one of you (as a Father* doth *his Children)*

12 *That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his Kingdom and Glory.*

11, 12. We not only were careful to set you a good Example, by our own regular Behaviour among you; but, as ye likewise well know, we counsel'd, intreated and excited every one of you, by all proper Arguments, to practise the like Christian-Duties that are incumbent upon you; and did all that in us lay to encourage you thereunto, and to comfort you under all your Tribulations; and we with the greatest Earnestness testified to you, (μαρτυρουμενοι) in the Name of the Lord Jesus, both publickly and privately, (*Acts* xx. 20) with all the Authority and Affection of a Father to his Children, that ye ought to live in such a becoming Manner,

Manner, as is suitable to the holy Nature and Will of God, and to his high and special Favour toward you, whom, as appears in its Fruits, he effectually called by the Gospel, to partake of all the Blessings and Honours of his Kingdom of Grace in this World, and of his Kingdom of Glory in the World to come.

13 *For this Cause also thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the Word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received* it *not* as *the Word of Men, but (as it is in Truth) the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.*

13. And, in Reflection on what God has done by us among you, we are exceeding thankful to him, blessing and praising his holy Name in our daily Addresses to him; because, when we were sent to preach the Gospel at *Thessalonica*, ye not only gave us the Hearing, which others of that City refused; (*Acts* xvii. 5) but, upon hearing our Message, your Hearts, like *Lydia*'s (Acts xvi. 14) were opened to attend to it, and embrace it with Reverence, Faith, Love and Obedience; and so ye believed and affectionately entertained it, not as a human Scheme, or upon the Foot of human Authority; but as a Revelation from God, (which it really is) and upon the Foot of his Authority, as a Doctrine, which, not we, but God himself, in his infinite Wisdom and Grace, is the Contriver and Author of, and commission'd us to preach; and which, through his special Blessing, works so powerfully and efficaciously with internal Energy, as to produce a happy and holy Change in your Sentiments, Principles and Views, Hearts and Lives, who by Faith received it, and who have thereby the best, the most satisfying and advantageous Demonstration to your own Consciences, that the Gospel itself, together with its wonderful Influence upon you, is, and could not but be, intirely of God.

14 *For ye, Brethren, became Followers of the Churches of God, which in Judea are in Christ Jesus: For ye also have suffered like Things of your own Countrymen, even as they* have *of the Jews.*

14. The powerful and blessed Effects of this Gospel upon you, my dear Brethren in Christ, are evident, as has been hinted, (*Chap.* i. 6) in your so readily receiving it, though attended with so much outward Affliction: For, from the Time of your embracing it with Faith and Love, ye became Imitators, not only of us, the Servants of our Lord, but also of the Churches, that are gathered in his Name, according to his Appointment, for religious Worship in *Judea*; and *that* particularly in their Courage and Patience under the Tribulations, which they endure for his Sake: For, at the Instigation of furious Zealots at *Thessalonica*, (Acts xvii. 5, 6) ye yourselves also have been insulted and abused; and, with Heroic Christian-Firmness of Mind, have calmly submitted to the same Sort of Persecutions from People of your own Country, as those Churches, for the same Cause, have cheerfully undergone the cruel Usage they met with from the *Jews* in their Parts.

15 *Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own Prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please*

15. Who, in the Madness of their Rage, embrued their wicked Hands, (*Acts* ii. 23) in the Blood of the Lord of Glory, the Saviour of his People from their Sins; and therein shew'd themselves to be in Spirit and Temper, as well as by Descent, the Children of those, that dealt in the

not God; and are contrary to all Men;

like unnatural and rebellious Manner with the antient Prophets, which God had raised up among them: (*Mat.* xxiii. 31, 37) And they have carried on this violent Persecution with the utmost Severity against us, the Apostles and Servants of Christ, and Professors of his Name, and particularly against myself at *Thessalonica*, and many other Places. And though they pretend to be God's peculiar Favourites, and that in killing us, as they did *Stephen* and *James*, (Acts vii. 59, 60, and xii. 2) they are doing him good Service, (*John* xvi. 2) they are really so far from being accepted of him, or approving themselves to him, that they act directly contrary to his merciful and holy Nature and Will, Law and Gospel; and are the worst of Enemies, not only to us, but to the common Happiness of all Mankind, and particularly of the *Gentiles*, whom they treat with the utmost Indignation, Contempt and Scorn;

16 Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles, that they might be saved, to fill up their Sins alway. For the Wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

16. Doing what in them lies to hinder us, (κωλυοντων ημας) the Ministers of Christ, from preaching the Gospel to the *Gentiles*, as being envious at their Conversion, in order to their eternal Salvation; they still persisting, by divine Permission, in their obstinate Prejudices and Opposition to the Messiah, and his Servants, wherever they come, to fill up the Measure of their own and their Fathers Iniquities, (*Mat.* xxiii 32) till God will bear with them no longer, as will soon appear by the awful Event: For righteous Vengeance has begun to seize *, and is about to come upon them in the most dreadful Executions, (εις τελος) to complete their Ruin, and put an End to their Church and State, without Redress, till the Fulness of the *Gentiles* be come in. (*Rom.* xi. 25.)

17 But we, Brethren, being taken from you for a short Time, in Presence, not in Heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your Face with great Desire.

17. But we, dear Brethren, were, sorely against our Will, forced away from you all on a sudden, for a short Season, which will soon be over, like that of an Hour, (προς καιρον ωρας) by reason of their Outrage, who hunted after our Blood; (*Acts* xvii. 5, 10) so that we could no longer continue with Safety in Person among you; which went as near our Hearts, as it could to the Heart of the tenderest dying Parents, whether nursing Mothers, or affectionate Fathers, (*ver.* 7, 11) to be torne away from their weak, helpless and exposed Orphans, (απορφανισθεντες) that would dearly miss them: But our Hearts are still as much as ever with you; and considering how we were snatch'd away from you unawares, and what need ye have of our further Counsel, Admonitions, Cautions and Encouragements, to animate and fortify you against the Dangers that surround you, we have been the more exceedingly diligent, and have try'd all possible Means, with the most affectionate Desire,

* The Verb, (εφθασεν) being the first *Aorist*, is of indeterminate Signification, and may, I think, be here more properly render'd *is about to come*, than *is come* upon them to the uttermost; because, tho' the Destruction of that People, and of their City and Temple, were drawing on apace, it was not fully accomplished, till about twenty Years afterwards.

and

and earnest Solicitude of Soul, to get an Opportunity of coming to you again, and conversing with you Face to Face.

18. *Wherefore we would have come unto you (even I Paul) once and again; But Satan hindered us.*

18. § For we fain would have returned to you, and attempted it Time after Time, even I *Paul* especially; but Satan, that great Adversary to Christ and his Gospel, to us his ministring Servants, and to your Souls, cut out Work for us in other Places, as particularly at *Berea* and *Athens*, (Acts xvii. 13—34.) by sowing the Seeds of Discord and Heresy, and spiriting up a violent Opposition to the Truth, which rendered it necessary for us to make a Stand against him and his Instruments, for the Vindication of the Gospel, and Establishment of the Saints in these Parts; and so he laid such Obstacles in our Way, to entangle and incumber us, as has hitherto prevented our Design of coming of you: But ye may be well assured we are still as mindful of you, and as sincerely and affectionately desirous, as ever, to return to you, if the Lord permit.

19. *For what* is *our Hope, or Joy, or Crown of rejoicing? are not even ye in the Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?*

19. For what is the chief Matter of our Hope with Respect to the happy Fruit of our Ministry, to animate us to it? Or what is our chief Joy in it? Or what the Crown of our glorying, as the Reward of our Labours at the End of it? Are not ye in an eminent Manner, my dearly beloved, whom, among other Converts, we expect to see at the Right-hand of Christ, and to present as a chaste Virgin to him, (2 *Cor.* xi. 2.) at his second Coming, *when he who is our Life shall appear, and ye*, together with us, *shall appear with him in Glory?* (Col. iii. 4. *)

20 *For ye are our Glory and Joy.*

20. For in Reflection on what ye already are, through Grace, and in Prospect of what ye shall then further be, by Means of our Ministrations to you, ye certainly are at present the Glory of our Ministry, and the Joy of our Hearts; and we doubt not but we shall find you so, to a still more exalted Degree, at the Day of Christ; when *they that be wise shall shine, as the Brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever*, (Daniel xii. 3.)

Recollections.

What a Joy of Heart is it to the Servants of the Lord Jesus, to be able to appeal to their Hearers, and to God himself, that they have been courageous, upright, laborious, humble, tender, self-denying, unblamable and disinterested, free from Covetousness and Vain-glory, in their Ministrations and Behaviour, even in the Midst of Persecutions and Reproaches for the

§ The *Alexandrian* and *Claremont* Copies, instead of (διὸ) *wherefore*, read (διότι) *for*; and this seems to agree best with the Apostle's Design in professing the Sincerity of his great Desire to come and see them

* In the like affectionate Flow of Language the Apostle wrote to the *Philippians*, Chap. iv. 1, to endear himself to them, as though they, to whom he was writing, were the only Matter of his Joy, (see the Note there.)

Sake

Sake of Christ, as Persons intrusted with the Gospel, and seeking, in dispensing it, not to please Men, but God; whom they consider, as the Searcher of their Hearts! With what grateful Reflections do they bless his holy and gracious Name, when he crowns their Labours with Success! And how happy is it for the Attendents on their Ministry to know, by their own Experience, that it has not been unprofitable to them; but that they have been enabled to receive it with Reverence, Faith and Love, merely upon the Foot of its divine Authority, and have felt its powerful Operation in their own Souls, to animate them unto all Patience in suffering for Christ, after the Example of the most celebrated Churches, and unto all holy Conversation and Godliness, suitable to their Privileges and Obligations, as true Believers, whom God has effectually called by the Gospel to inherit all the Blessings and Honours of his Kingdom of Grace here, and of Glory hereafter! Alas! how desperately malignant against Christ, and his Servants and Disciples, is a Spirit of Persecution! 'Tis a direct Imitation of the great Adversary the Devil, and promotes his Interest and Designs, under his wicked Influence; it fills up the Measure of their Iniquities, who persist in the Practice of it; and ripens them for Destruction, till Wrath comes upon them to the uttermost. But with what parental Tenderness do faithful Pastors sympathize with their Flocks in their Tribulations! How gladly would they visit, assist, encourage and comfort them under their Trials, as Opportunity offers! And with what flowing Affection do they think of the dear Seals of their Ministry, as their Glory and Joy, and as those, whom they trust the Lord Jesus Christ will publickly own, as the Crown of their rejoicing, when he shall come to judge the World at the last Day.

CHAP. III.

The Apostle gives still further Proof of his great Affection to them, in his having sent Timothy *to establish and comfort them,* 1—5. *In his rejoicing at the good Tidings of their Faith and Love,* 6—9. *And in his praying for an Opportunity of returning to them, and for their Perseverance and Increase in Grace, till the second Coming of Christ,* 10—13.

TEXT.

1 WHerefore, when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone,

PARAPHRASE.

1. SO great was the Solicitude of my Mind about you, as young Converts in the perilous Circumstances, in which I was forced, all of a sudden, to leave you, that when, upon my arriving at *Athens*, (Acts xvii. 15.) and meeting with various Disappointments of my Scheme for returning to you, I grew more uneasy in my Concern for you, than I well knew how any longer to bear, or conceal from you; ([illegible]) § I rather chose to be left there alone, to struggle with the many Difficulties I had to encounter, in Disputes with the *Jews*, and with the *Epicurean* and *Stoic* Philosophers, (*Acts* xvii. 17, 18.) than to remain uncertain about the State of your Affairs, or neglect any Thing that might contribute to your Help.

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§ Though *Silvanus* or *Silas* and *Timothy* were with the Apostle *Paul* at *Corinth* when he wrote this Epistle from thence, Chap. i. 1. yet *Silas* seems not to have been with him, while he was at *Athens*; and so he was alone after he had sent *Timothy* from thence to *Thessalonica*; (see the Note on *Acts* xviii. 5.) and though he still speaks in the plural Number, he had given Notice, Chap. ii. 18. that what he was saying, in a Way of Concern for them, and Desire of seeing them, related in a peculiar Manner to himself.

 2. And

2 And sent Timotheus our Brother and Minister of God, and our Fellow-labourer in the Gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your Faith;

2. And therefore, though I much needed the Company and Assistance of the dear *Timothy*, who was there, and might have been very useful to me, and is indeed my affectionate Brother, and a faithful ministring Servant after God's own Heart, commissioned by his Authority, and richly endowed with Gifts and Graces, to promote his Cause and Kingdom in the World, and is a laborious Copartner with me in the Work of preaching that blessed Gospel of Salvation, which has Christ for its Author and principal Subject; yet, for your Sakes, I cheerfully parted with that excellent young Evangelist, and dispatched him to you, that he might know how Matters go with you; (*v.* 5.) and that, supplying my Place, he might labour to strengthen and confirm your Faith in Christ, and in the great Doctrines of the Gospel, and (παρακαλέσαι) might exhort you to hold them fast, and help to revive a sweet Sense in your Souls of the glorious Advantages and Delights, that will result from your Faith, even in this World, and much more in the World to come.

3 That no Man should be moved by these Afflictions. For yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

3. That so none of you might be disheartened or staggered at the Persecutions, which both yourselves, and we, the Ministers of Christ, have endured for his Sake: And ye ought not to be discouraged or shaken in Mind on this Account; for as the worst, as well as the best, that is to be expected from your faithful Adherence to Christ, has been set before you, ye cannot but know, that God, in his eternal, infinitely wise and holy Counsels, has appointed us, the Servants and Disciples of Jesus, to Sufferings for his Sake, as well as to be Partakers of his Glory. (1 *Peter* ii. 12, 13.)

4 For verily when we were with you, we told you before, that we should suffer Tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.

4. For even when I and my Fellow-labourers were present with you *, we warned you before-hand to prepare for the worst, that as all that *will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer Persecution, and must through much Tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God*; (2 Tim. iii. 12. Acts iv. 14, 22.) so we should certainly have our Share in the common Lot; and accordingly, as ye may well remember, it soon afterward proved in the Event; ye yourselves having experienced it, and been Eye-witnesses of the Storm that fell upon us at *Thessalonica*, (Acts xvii. 5, *&c.*)

5 For this Cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your Faith, lest by some Means the

5. When therefore, as was said before, (*v.* 1. 2.) I could no longer bear the Anxiety of my Mind concerning you, on Account of the difficult and trying Circumstances, in which I was forced to leave you, I sent the beloved and faithful *Timothy* to see how it fares with your Faith; having

* By this Time both *Silas* and *Timothy* were come to the Apostle at *Corinth*, as appears from *Acts* xviii. 1, 5. compared with the Inscription of this Epistle; and he here refers to what had past at *Thessalonica*, when they were there with him, and so may be understood to include them with himself in what he speaks in the plural Number in this, and, mostly at least, in some following Verses.

a *godly*

Tempter have tempted you, and our Labour be in vain.

a *godly Jealousy over you,* (2 Cor. xi. 2.) lest by the Violence of Persecutions, and subtle Intrigues of false Teachers, and by inward Suggestions, or any other Means, that malicious, artful and busy Adversary, the Devil, might have thrown Temptations in your Way, to turn you back from Christ and the Gospel; and so all the hopeful Pains, we had taken for your Conversion, should have proved to be ineffectual, and the promising Appearances should have come to nothing, at least as to some of you, directly contrary to our strong Persuasion in the Judgment of Charity, founded upon visible Effects, (*Chap.* i. 4, 5. see the Note there) that ye really were the beloved and chosen of God to eternal Salvation.

6 *But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good Tidings of your Faith and Charity, and that ye have good Remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also* to see *you;*

6. But now my former good Hopes concerning you are abundantly confirmed. When our dear Brother *Timothy* lately returned from you to us at *Corinth*, (Acts xviii. 5. see the Note there) he gave us the most agreeable and satisfactory Account, that, notwithstanding all your Trials and Dangers, ye continue stedfast in the Faith of the Gospel, and, as a Proof of its Sincerity, in your Love to Christ, and to his Ordinances and Ways, to one another and to all his faithful Servants; and particularly that ye retain an affectionate Remembrance of us in your daily Prayers, and a lively Sense of the excellent Doctrines we preached, and are often speaking of our Persons and Ministry with Esteem and Honour; and that, in Reflection on the Benefit ye received by our former Labours among you, ye are earnestly desirous of seeing us again, as I have assured you, (*Chap.* ii. 17.) we also are to see and be further assistant to you.

7 *Therefore, Brethren, we were comforted over you, in all your Afflictions and Distress, by your Faith.*

7. Having therefore, beloved Brethren, received these good Tidings of your steady Perseverance in the Faith of Christ, and of its genuine Fruits, our rejoicing on your Account intirely removed all the painful Anxiety about you, that before distressed our Minds; (*ver.* 5.) and was a reviving Cordial to us under all the Troubles, that we have been exposed to here for the Gospel's Sake, (*Acts* xviii. 1—18.)

8 *For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.*

8. For whatsoever were our Difficulties here, and our Dejections and Solicitude concerning you before, which were like Death to us, we are now alive and comfortable in our own Souls, and go on cheerfully in our Work; since (ἐὰν) ye continue stedfast in your Adherence to the Lord Jesus, and *hold fast the Profession of your Faith without wavering;* (Heb. x. 25.) *we having no greater Joy than to find that ye, our* spiritual *Children, walk in the Truth.* (3 John ver. 3, 4.)

9 *For what Thanks can we render to God again for you for all the Joy wherewith we joy for your Sakes before our God,*

9. For considering the happy State of your Affairs, How can we ever be thankful enough, in fresh Returns of Gratitude and Praise to our God, for his Grace bestowed upon you, and for giving us Hearts to rejoice so exceedingly in it: This we sincerely do, as in his Sight and Presence, who knows that we are greatly affected in every Reflection upon

 it,

it, and whenever we appear before him, in our solemn Devotions.

10 *Night and Day praying exceedingly, that we might see your Face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your Faith?*

10. So near do ye lie to our Hearts, that in our stated Addresses to God every Evening and Morning, (See the Note on 2 *Tim.* i. 3) and at all other Seasons of approaching him, our Prayers are carried out to an extraordinary Degree of Importunity and Fervor, (ὑπερ ἐκπερισσȣ) that, if it be his blessed Will, we might have an Opportunity of making you a Visit once again; and of being farther instrumental, in his Hand, for giving you a complete View of the Doctrines of Faith, which we could not do, while we were with you, by reason of our being driven away from you, before we were aware; (*Acts* xvii. 10) and for establishing, settling, and further building you up on your most holy Faith, and helping you against all the Defects, which, as to its Extent, Clearness and lively Exercise, still attend that, and every other Grace; as there will be something of this Kind of Defect, in both these Considerations of it, not only in young, though growing Converts, but even in the most advanced Christians upon Earth.

11 *Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our Way unto you.*

11. Now, in order to your Help herein, we still continue to be importunate in our Prayers, that God himself, whose Kingdom rules over all, and who is your and our Covenant-God and Father; and that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who, in his Office-capacity, *is Head over all Things to the Church*, (Ephes. i. 22) would please to order, by an over-ruling Providence, that our Way may be made plain, and our Course may be soon directed, as it were in a straight Line to you, (κατευθυναι) free from all the Difficulties and Avocations, that have hitherto obstructed it.

12 *And the Lord make you to increase and abound in Love one towards another, and towards all* Men, *even as we* do *towards you:*

12. And as we know that all the Success of our best Designs and Endeavours depend intirely on the divine Blessing, Our Hearts Desire and Prayer is, that, whether we be permitted to come to you, or not, the Lord Jesus, who is a Head of Influence, as well as of Government, would enable you by his Spirit still more and more to grow, and increase to an Overflowing, in your affectionate Christian-Love *, and in its abounding Fruits and Effects, by all Manner of Means, one towards another, as Members of the same Church, and of the Body of Christ, and as Children of the same heavenly Father; and towards all the Saints in general, of what Denomination soever they be; and even in all Good-will towards all Men of every Character, with as much Sincerity and Aboundings therein, as our Affection does toward you.

* The Apostle's praying that *the Lord would make them to increase and abound in Love one towards another*, and his *beseeching them to increase more and more therein*, Chap. iv. 10, suppose that they did already live in the Practice of it; and he there expresly observes, to their Commendation, that they *did it towards all the Brethren, which were in all* Macedonia.

13 *To the End he may stablish your Hearts unblameable in Holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his Saints.*

13. To the End that, in this Way and Manner, he may strengthen, settle and confirm your whole Souls in every Grace, and in the Doctrine of the Gospel; and may preserve you blameless in every good Word and Work, and in all holy Conversation, to such a Degree, as is at present well-pleasing in the Eyes of the infinitely pure and all-seeing God, even our reconciled God and Father, and as shall continue until, and issue in your being *presented holy, and unblameable, and unreproveable in his Sight*, (Col. i. 22) at the second Appearance of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who will come to judge the World, with a bright Retinue of all his glorified Saints and holy Angels, at the last Day. (*Chap.* iv. 16, 17, 2 *Thess.* i. 7, 10, and *Jude* ver. 14.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

What an amiable Example to Gospel-Ministers has the great Apostle set in his warm Affection to, and solicitous Concern for the Church! They, like him, ought to demonstrate their Love to, and use all Means for the Establishment and Comfort of the Souls, that are under their Watch and Care; and for taking off Discouragements, that might arise from the Hardships for the Sake of the Gospel, which God, in his wise and holy Counsels and Providence, has allotted to them, and given them Reason to expect. And ah! what a touching and painful Grief of Heart is it to tender and faithful Pastors, to be afraid, lest, through the Subtilty and Violence of Satan and his Emissaries, Professors, of whom they have hoped well, should miscarry, and all the Labour that had been spent upon them should come to nothing! But O! the Joy that springs up in their Souls, and adds a Relish to Life itself, when they find that their dearly beloved Charge continue stedfast in the Faith, and that their Faith works by Love to Christ and one another, and to his ministring Servants, especially to such of them as have been Instruments of their Conversion; and that it spreads with a benevolent Temper towards all Mankind, as such! How does their Knowledge of this engage their Thankfulness to God, and animate them to go on with Cheerfulness and Joy in all their Services and Sufferings; and to contribute, what in them lies, for the further Establishment of their Flocks in Faith and Love, and for perfecting all which concerns them, that they may be unblameable in Holiness in the Sight of God, until, and in the Day of Christ! For this they have a longing Desire to see them, and be further helpful to them; for this they labour, whether present or absent, looking up to God to direct their Way; and for this they continually pray to the God of all Grace, as their God and Father in Christ, and to the Lord Jesus, as their great and only Head and Mediator, who will certainly appear a second Time to the Salvation of all the Saints. And may it be our chief Concern, and happy Lot, to be found among them, whom he will gather together to be glorified with him at the last Day!

CHAP. IV.

The Apostle exhorts the Thessalonians *to Chastity and Holiness in their Lives, 1—8. To brotherly Love, a peaceable Behaviour and Diligence in their secular Callings, 9—12. And to moderate their Grief for the Death of godly Relations and Friends, in Consideration of the glorious Resurrection of their Bodies at Christ's second coming; from which Time forwards all the Saints, that may then be dead, or living upon the Earth, shall be ever with the Lord, 13—18.*

TEXT.

TEXT.

1 *FUrthermore then we beseech you, Brethren, and exhort* you, *by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.*

2 *For ye know what Commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.*

3 *For this is the Will of God,* even *your Sanctification, that ye should abstain from Fornication:*

4 *That every one of you should know how to possess his Vessel in Sanctification and Honour;*

PARAPHRASE.

1. IN order to your being established in Holiness at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all the Saints, (*Chap.* iii. 13) It remains then, (το λοιπον ουν) my dearly beloved Brethren, that we with all Tenderness and Affection intreat you, and with all Authority in the Name, for the Sake, and in the Stead of our Lord and Saviour, injoin and excite you, that, as ye have had Directions and Commands from us, under the Inspiration of his Spirit, relating to the Manner in which ye ought to order the whole Course of your religious and moral Conversation, in all Well-pleasingness to God, thro' Christ; and that, as ye have, generally speaking, attended to our Exhortations, and put them into Practice hitherto; so ye would labour, by divine Grace, to improve and excel therein every Day yet more and more.

2. For ye well know, and can't but remember, what holy Precepts we deliver'd to you, when we were with you, as the Rule of your Behaviour in all Things; and with what solemn and evangelical Arguments we enforced, and bound them upon your Consciences, by the immediate Authority of the exalted Lord and Saviour of his Body, the Church.

3. For, as ye have often heard from us, who have preached moral Duties, as well as, and upon the Foundation of evangelical Doctrines, this is the ordaining, approving and preceptive Will of God, yea, is what he intended in bestowing his Grace upon you, namely, That, encouraged by the Promises of his Covenant, *ye cleanse yourselves from all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, perfecting Holiness in his Fear:* (2 Cor. vii. 1) And particularly, that ye carefully avoid, and keep at the remotest Distance from simple Fornication, and all Manner of Uncleanness, (See the Note on 1 *Cor.* v. 1) in Thought, Word and Deed, and from every thing that tends towards, or might be an Enticement to that Sin, which the *Gentile*-Converts especially among you may have been most guilty of, in the Days of their Unregeneracy, and may be still too much in Danger of being drawn into, through the Temptations that surround them, from their old Acquaintance.

4. In Opposition thereunto, 'tis plainly the Will of God, that all and every one of you, whether *Jewish* or *Gentile*-Believers, should know by the Gospel, and our Ministry of it, his indispensible Obligation to, and in what Manner, and by what Motives, Means, and Assistances from above, he may, occupy and make use of his Body *, which is the

* *His Vessel* may be supposed to signify *his Wife*, who is called the *weaker Vessel*; (1 Pet. iii. 7) but it seems more agreeable to the Manner of the Apostle's arguing here against simple Fornication, to understand it of his *own Body*, which is spoken of as *a Vessel*, 1 Sam. xxi. 5, and 2 Cor. ii. 6,

Receptacle of the Soul, with Temperance, Chastity and Purity, and with Honour to God, to human Nature, to the Christian-character, and to the Relation which the Bodies of the Saints bear to the Holy Ghost, as his Temple. (See 1 *Cor.* vi. 18, 19, 20.)

5 *Not in the Lust of Concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:*

5. The Christian therefore is by no means to indulge, or give way to any Gratification of defiling Passions, Appetites and Inclinations, that work with sensual Desire after unlawful Embraces of any Kind; such as are practised by the idolatrous Heathens, that are Strangers to the Knowledge of the only living and true God, and are notoriously infamous for the vilest Abominations. (*Rom.* i. 24—28.)

6 *That no* Man *go beyond and defraud his Brother in any Matter: Because that the Lord* is *the Avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you, and testified.*

6. We furthermore beseech and exhort you, in the Name of Christ, that none of you ever dare, by any Means, to act a dishonest Part of what Nature soever, much less to transgress in this Matter, so as, through vicious Inclinations, to break in upon the matrimonial Bond, by going into such a criminal Conversation with the Wife of any one, that may be called a Brother † in a religious Sense, or even as a Member of Civil Society, and Partaker of human Nature, as would be an Injury to him, and a Violation of her Chastity: For *Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge*, (Heb. xiii. 4) so as to execute dreadful Vengeance, in a way of just Retribution, upon all Persons that allow themselves in such wicked Practices, as we likewise formerly in our Ministrations to, and Converses with you, have seriously forewarn'd you of it, and bore Witness against this Sin, as abominable in his Sight.

7 *For God hath not called us unto Uncleanness, but unto Holiness.*

7 For the infinitely Holy God, in calling us by his Gospel and his Grace to the Knowledge and Fellowship of Jesus Christ our Lord, was so far from designing to allow us to live in any Iniquity, which is the Defilement of our Nature, or in any Sort of Uncleanness; that, on the contrary, he has thereby laid us under the highest Obligations, and enforced them by additional Motives, to be chaste and holy, in all Manner of Conversation, and without Blame before him in Love.

8 *He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not Man, but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit.*

8. Whosoever therefore he be, that rejects these Admonitions and Commands, or treats them with Neglect and Contempt, does not therein put a Slight upon the Authority of Men, as not to be regarded; but in reality despises, and rejects the Authority of the great God himself, as delivering them by us, his inspired Servants; even of that God, who hath also given to us his Holy Spirit, to speak in and by

† 'Tis, I think, justly observed by some, that *going beyond and defrauding his Brother* relates not, chiefly at least, to what we call *moral Honesty*, but to violating the Right and Property that a Man has in his Wife, by invading his peculiar Claim to her: This makes it all of a Piece with the foregoing and following Context; and, perhaps, here may be some Reference to the unnatural Sin between Man and Man, which was practised among the *Gentiles*. Rom. i. 26, 27.

us;

us; and so has given a divine Sanction to what we say from him; § yea, who hath given his enlightning and sanctifying Spirit to all of us, who are true Believers, to direct and engage a ready Compliance with every Duty, that he enjoins upon us.

9 *But as touching brotherly Love, ye need not that I write unto you: For ye your selves are taught of God to love one another.*

9. But as to the great Duty of Love, which stands in direct Opposition to the fore-mentioned Vices, and which ye in a special Manner owe to one another, as Brethren in the Faith, Hope, Holiness and Blessings of the Gospel, I need not inculcate *this* upon you, as though ye were backward to it: For ye yourselves, as Christians, have such a lively Sense of your Obligation to it, and such strong Dispositions for it, by the Teachings of God's Word and Spirit, as to know from sweet Experience, what this cordial Affection toward Fellow-christians means, as I have already supposed in my Prayers, that ye *may increase and abound in it.* (See the Note on Chap. iii. 12.)

10 *And indeed ye do it towards all the Brethren, which are in all Macedonia. But we beseech you, Brethren, that ye increase more and more.*

10. And I am well satisfied that, by the Grace of God, ye are inclined and enabled to practise this amiable and important Duty, as eminently appears in your exemplary Temper and Behaviour, not only toward the Members of your own Church, but even to all your Christian-brethren in the Faith and Fellowship of the Gospel, all around you, in the various Churches, that are planted throughout the Province of *Macedonia*; so that nothing remains for me to do on this Head, but only to excite and encourage you, my dear Brethren, to persevere and excel yet more and more in your Fervor therein, and in every suitable Demonstration of it, as there may be still further Occasions for its Exercise, and *that* with still wider Extent, in all other Places, and particularly toward your *Jewish* Brethren, the poor Saints at *Jerusalem*. (2 Cor. viii. 1—4. See the Notes there.)

11 *And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own Business, and to work with your own Hands, as we commanded you;*

11. And to this I would add my earnest Intreaties, that ye all would studiously endeavour to show a holy Ambition, and eager Concern (φιλοτιμεῖσθαι) to behave with a meek and peaceable Temper, and not officiously and needlesly intrude into other People's Affairs, and create Disturbances, either in private Families, or the Neighbourhood, or in the Church or State; and that ye would attend to the Duties of your own respective Stations, and personal Concerns, and labour diligently in the Business of your secular Calling *, that, as Occasions require, your own Hands may be

§ *Who hath given to us his holy Spirit*, may refer either to the *Apostles*, by whom God delivered these Precepts, or to *Believers*, whom he has called *not unto Uncleanness, but unto Holiness*; (ver. 7.) accordingly some antient Copies read *unto you*.

* *To work with their own Hands* was necessary for those among them, whose Circumstances called for it, and had a particular Respect to the lower Ranks of People, who in that trading City were to be employed in Manufactures; But it may be carried into a general Rule for Diligence in discharging the Duties of every Station, in such a Way as is suitable to it; since Idleness is a detestable Vice, as it

industriously employed in providing for yourselves and Families, and for such good Things of this Life, as may enable you to give to them that need your Assistance, (*Ephes.* iv. 28.) according to the Orders, which we, the Apostles and Ministers of Christ, gave you to that Purpose, when we were with you; which we also recommended by our own Example. (See 2 *Thes.* iii. 7, 10.)

12 *That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and* that *ye may have lack of nothing.*

12. My great Design in pressing Diligence in your honest Callings is, that ye may *adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour in all Things,* (Titus ii. 10.) and may live (ευσχημονως) in such an upright, faithful, decent and becoming Manner towards all Men, as shall take off Prejudices from the Minds of those that are out of the Pale of the Church, and even of Enemies to Christianity, who would gladly catch at any Opportunity of reproaching it, as if it made its Converts an idle and worthless Sort of People, rather a Burden and Scandal, than a Benefit and Honour to the Community; and that, instead of being beholden to the Charity of others, ye may have a Sufficiency of all needful Things to supply your own Wants.

13 *But I would not have you to be ignorant, Brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others which have no Hope.*

13. But to fortify and comfort you, my dear Brethren, against the invidious and severe Censures of *Jewish* Zealots, as though no uncircumcised *Gentile* can be admitted to the Kingdom of Heaven *; and to caution you against such excessive Lamentations over the Dead, as are used among the *Heathens,* and as God has forbidden to his Children, (*Deut.* iv. 1.) I am much concerned that ye should* know, and be well satisfied about, the Happiness of those of your pious Relations and Acquaintance in another World, who died in the Faith of Christ, and whose Bodies are gone to Rest in the Grave, as Persons fallen asleep to awake again, (see the Note 1 *Cor.* xi. 30.) that ye may not grieve and mourn over the Loss of them, as your Heathen-neighbours do over their departed Friends, concerning whom they have no Hope of their ever rising again to eternal Life: But there is no Room for your entertaining such a melancholy Thought, with Respect to deceased Believers in Christ:

14 *For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which*

14. For if we are really and firmly persuaded, upon clear Evidence, as all true Christians are, that the only Saviour of them that believe in him, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles,* actually died to expiate their Sins, and *rose again for their*

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it is a dishonourable Waste of our Time and Talents, renders us useless in the World, exposes to many Temptations, and defeats every valuable End of living; and the *slothful* is called a *wicked and unprofitable Servant, that shall be cast into outer Darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth,* (Matt. xxv. 26, 30.)

* In those Days there were *Jewish* Zealots that pretended to exclude all from future Happiness, that were not of their own Nation, or incorporated with them by being circumcised; and the idolatrous Heathens went into excessive Howlings and Mournings over their Dead, whom they looked upon as lost for ever, and especially with respect to *the Body,* the Resurrection of which none of them had any Notion of; and as the Apostle might have his Eye upon both these Cases, to guard against them, they are referred to in the Paraphrase.

sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

Justification, and as *the First-fruits of them that sleep in him*; (Rom. iv. 25, and 1 Cor. xv. 20) we must needs also be fully satisfied upon this Ground, that God, (δια του Ιησου) through the Power of the Death, and the Virtue of the Resurrection of Jesus, will quicken them, that sleep in Union with him, (*ver.* 16) to an immortal and glorious Life; and will gather them together with him, as Members with their Head, at his second coming, *when he who is their Life shall appear*, and *they shall appear with him in Glory*. (Col. iii. 4.)

15 *For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep.*

15. For, to lead you into something still further, that ye as yet are intirely unacquainted with; we, his inspired Servants, declare unto you, not of our own Head, but by the infallible Word of the Lord Jesus, which he has communicated to us by immediate Revelation, with Authority to publish it to others *, that, considering the whole Church, as one collective Body in the present and all succeeding Generations to the End of the World; whoever they be of us that are to be reckon'd to this Body, as Members of it, and shall be living and left (περιλειπομενοι) in the Church Militant here upon Earth, until the Time of Christ's coming again in all his Glory, we shall not anticipate, much less prevent, the Resurrection of the Bodies of those Saints, that will then be sleeping in their Graves.

16 *For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Archangel, and with the Trump of God: And the Dead in Christ shall rise first.*

16. For, at that important Day, the Lord Jesus himself will, in his human Nature, as visibly descend from Heaven, in a Cloud of Glory, like the antient *Shechina*, as, after his Resurrection, he ascended up to Heaven with a Retinue of Angels surrounding him; (*Acts* i. 9, 11. See the Paraphrase there) and he will do this with an awful Summons, (εν κελευσματι) which shall be uttered with great Solemnity, as with a loud Voice of the Chief of all the Angels, the rest attending him, (*Mat.* xxv. 31) and with the exceeding louder Voice of the great God our Saviour, Christ himself, as though given forth with the Sound of a Trumpet, like

* To suppose that the Apostle thought, and suggested, as if any of the then present Age would live upon Earth, till the Time of Christ's second coming to Judgment, is to overthrow all Dependence upon his Authority and Inspiration, when he tells us that what he here said was *by the Word of the Lord*; and 'tis evident that as he often spake of his own Death, so he expected a Resurrection to eternal Life, together with the Believers of that Generation, 2 *Cor.* iv. 14, and v. 1—4, and *Phil.* iii 10, 11; And in his 2d Epistle to the *Thessalonians*, Chap. ii. 1—8, he sets himself to confute the Notion of those, that suggested, through a Mistake of his Meaning in what he here had said, as if the second coming of Christ were then at hand; and he reminds them of what he had told them to the contrary, when he was with them, which was before he wrote either of his Epistles to them. But as Believers of all Ages and Nations make up but one collective Body, Church, or Houshold of Faith, all that belong to that Body may, with Propriety enough, speak of themselves, as Parts of it in the first Person plural, relating to the future, as well as present Time. In this Manner the Apostle speaks on this very Subject, saying, Behold *I shew you a Mystery, we shall not all sleep; but we shall all be changed; the Dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed*; (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52, see the Note there) and in common Language among ourselves, when we speak of a Nation, or any Company of which we are a Part, we often say we shall be very happy, or miserable, whenever such and such Events come to pass, whether we may ever live to see them, or not.

that which was heard on Mount *Sinai* at the Publication of the Law †, and like what was often used for gathering solemn Assemblies together; (*Ex.* xix. 16, *Jer.* iv. 5, and *Joel* ii. 15) and then the Bodies of those, that died in a State of federal and vital Union with Christ, shall be quickned to a glorious Immortality, not only before the Wicked shall be raised, but even before the Saints, that may then be alive on Earth, shall be brought together with him. (*ver.* 14.)

17 *Then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air: And so shall we ever be with the Lord.*

17. Then, after the Resurrection of departed Believers to eternal Life, those of us that are of this holy Community, and belong to Christ's mystical Body, or his true Church, and may be found living, and dwelling with that Part of it, which shall continue upon Earth till that Day, shall undergo a refining Change, (1 *Cor.* xv. 31) and be raised up by his almighty Power to ascend, as one Body with our Fellow Members, that shall awake from their *Sleep in the Dust of the Earth, to everlasting Life*; (Dan. xii. 2) and we with them shall be carried up by a divine Rapture in the Clouds of Glory, in which he will then appear, that all of us together may have a happy Meeting with our dear Lord in the Regions of the Air, never to part again *: And being then own'd and acquitted by him, and adjudged, as the Blessed of his Father, to *inherit the Kingdom prepared for us from the Foundation of the World*, (Mat. xxv. 34) we shall thenceforward be, in Soul and Body to all Eternity, with the Lord Jesus himself, to abide in his immediate Presence, *where he is, to behold his Glory.* (John xvii. 24.)

18 *Wherefore, comfort one another with these Words.*

18. Let these Considerations therefore, taken from the Word of the Lord, comfort your Hearts, with respect to the happy Condition of your departed Christian-friends, and with respect to the joyful Meeting, which ye shall have with them in the Presence of Christ at his coming; and let these Things be the daily Subject of your Discourse one with another, for your mutual Comfort, and the Excitation of each other (παρακαλεῖτε ἀλλήλους) to a composed, resigned and cheerful Frame of Spirit, under all your present Trials, and particularly under the Loss of such as sleep in Jesus, how near and dear soever they were to you; and under every Prospect of your own approaching Dissolution.

† As the *Trump of God* seems most immediately to allude to the Voice of the Trumpet exceeding loud, when *the Lord*, or *Jehovah* (which I take, with several learned Divines, to mean *the Son of God*) deliver'd the Law at Mount *Sinai*; (See the Note on *Acts* vii. 38) so *the Trump of God*, which is not to be understood in a literal Sense, may possibly signify *the Voice of Christ*, which he says *all that are in their Graves shall hear, and shall come forth, they that have done Good to the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done Evil to the Resurrection of Damnation.* (John v. 28, 29.)

* 'Tis very probable that Christ's Seat of Judgment will be *in the Air*; since he is so often spoken of as appearing in *the Clouds*, and in *the Clouds of Heaven*, and no Place of this Earth can scarce be thought capacious enough for the innumerable Multitude of the Righteous and the Wicked, from the Beginning to the End of the World, to appear before his Throne; and the Wicked can't be supposed to be summon'd before it in Heaven.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How concern'd should Christians be to increase and abound every day, yet more and more, in all Holiness of Heart and Life, according to the Will of God, and as may be most pleasing in his Sight! And how watchful ought they to be against, and abhorrent of all Sensuality, and Impurity of every Kind, as knowing that God hath called them, not to Uncleanness, but unto Holiness, and will execute righteous Vengeance upon all the Workers of Iniquity! Whoever neglects or despises the Commandments, which his Servants deliver by the Authority of the Lord Jesus, according to his inspired Word, throws Contempt, not upon Man only, but upon God himself.—How amiable is that brotherly Love, which true Believers are taught of God by his Word and Spirit to cherish, and exercise one towards another, together with such a peaceable and quiet Temper, as disposes and influences them, not to intrude into Affairs that don't belong to them, but to be diligent in attending to the Duties of their own Stations, that they may get an honourable Livelihood, and support the Credit of Religion among its Enemies, and prevent Occasions of their reproaching it, as tho' it encouraged Idleness!—As our Christian-Friends and we ourselves must die, either in the ordinary Course of Nature, or by a violent Death, how comfortable is it, and relieving to our Sorrows, when any of them are taken from us, to be well satisfied, that they sleep in Jesus, and shall rise again to eternal Life; and that we shall meet them again, when God will bring them and us to be glorified with him! O reviving Thought! that as soon as the Dead in Christ shall be raised from their Graves, the rest of the Saints, that shall be living upon Earth at his second glorious Coming, shall, by the wonderful Operation of Divine Power, pass under a refining Change of their mortal Bodies into an immortal Frame; shall be caught up, together with risen Saints, to meet their Lord in the illustrious Cloud, where he will appear in the Air; and from thenceforth all together, as one Body, shall in their whole Persons dwell with him, in his immediate blissful Presence for ever!

CHAP. V.

The Apostle exhorts the Thessalonians *to be always ready for the coming of Christ to Judgment, which will be with Suddenness and Surprise, like a Thief in the Night,* 1—11. *Directs them to several particular Duties in their relative and personal Capacities,* 12—22. *And concludes his Epistle with Prayer, Salutations and a Benediction,* 23—28.

TEXT.

1 BUT *of the Times and the Seasons, Brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. BUT, as to the precise Time that God has set, and the fittest of all Opportunities (καιρων) that he designs to take, for Christ's appearing to execute the Judgment of the great Day, which will be the Consummation of your Happiness, (*Chap.* iv. 13—18) Ye, my dear Brethren in the Faith of the Gospel, have no Occasion, nor would it be to any good Purpose, for me to gratify a vain Curiosity, by attempting to write to you about a Point, that is intirely reserved, as an absolute Secret, in the Counsels of the divine Mind; nor would it be of any Advantage to you, were I capable of acquainting you with it.

2 *For yourselves know perfectly, that the Day of the Lord*

2. For, from what our Blessed Lord himself and his Apostles have taught, ye yourselves have been already led (ακριβως) into an accurate Knowledge of all that is necessary and

so cometh as a Thief in the Night.

and useful, relating to his final Appearance, that ye may be constantly on your Watch, and in a proper Readiness for it: Ye must needs be well satisfied in your own Minds, that the glorious Manifestation of Christ, at his coming to judge the whole World, is unalterably fixed in the Purpose of God, and foretold in his Word, and shall certainly be brought to pass, according thereunto, in its proper Season; but that the particular Day, or appointed Time for it, is as uncertain, with respect to our Knowledge of it, and will come as unexpectedly, on a sudden, to all of us, and with as much Terror and Surprise to the Wicked and Ungodly, that are unprepared for it *, as a Thief's breaking into a House at Midnight can be to the Master of it, while he and all his Family are asleep, and have no Apprehensions of it, or concern about it, to keep them on their Watch, and guard against it. (*Mat.* xxiv. 42, 43, and *Rev.* iii. 3.)

3 *For when they shall say, Peace and Safety, then sudden Destruction cometh upon them, as Travail upon a Woman with Child; and they shall not escape.*

3. For when secure Sinners shall flatter themselves, and when, according to their own fond Desires, false Teachers shall *prophesy unto them smooth Things, and Deceits, saying, Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace*; (Is. xxx. 10, and Jer. vi. 14) at that very Time, utter Destruction of Soul and Body shall rush in upon them at unawares; and *that* as certainly and suddenly, as the exquisite travailing Pains of a Woman with Child come upon her, when, though she continually carries the Cause of them in her own Body, she least of all expects them, as being engaged in other Affairs, in Business or Diversions, or in Eating, Drinking or Sleeping: And as she sooner or later must inevitably undergo the agonizing Pains of Labour †; so, whenever this terrible Day of the Lord shall come, none of those that are thoughtless about, and unprepared for it, shall by any means be able to fly from, (ου μη εκφυγωσι) or avoid the insupportable Miseries, that their own Unbelief, and other Sins, will bring upon them. (2 *Thess.* i. 9.) There shall then be no Place, *where the Workers of Iniquity may hide themselves* from the Fierceness of his righteous Indignation. (*Job* xxxiv. 22.)

4 *But ye, Brethren, are not in Darkness, that that*

4. But as for you, my dear Christian-Brethren, ye may think of this Day with Joy, and not with Grief or distressing Fears; as ye are not, like others, under the Power of spi-

* "In this and the following Verses, two elegant and very apposite Comparisons are join'd together, (says Mr. *Blackwall* in his Sacred Classicks, Vol. I. Pag. 209) the more forcibly and fully to represent the Suddenness of our Saviour's coming to Judgment; and the Verbs are in the present Time, to make the Description more affecting and awful."

† *The Pains of a Woman in Travail*, which are some of the sharpest Agonies of Nature, are frequently spoken of as Emblems of great Distress, as in *Ps.* xlviii. 6, *Jer* vi. 24, and xiii. 21, and xxii. 23, and l. 43; 'Tis therefore with great Propriety, that the Apostle represents the exquisite Torments of the Wicked, at the great Day by those Pains, with regard to the *extreme Anguish*, as well as the *unexpected Suddenness* of them: And it may carry a further Intimation that, as a Woman's Hour of Sorrow is the Fruit of her being with Child; so the Cause of the Sinner's Miseries lies in himself, whose own Iniquities procure them.

ritual

Day should overtake you as a Thief.

ritual Darkness, to make you sleep secure in Sin, faithless and unconcern'd about the coming of Christ, and unready to meet him in that awful Day, which, tho' it may come as much unexpected and unawares to you, as to them, with regard to the particular Time of it; yet it shall not be with a Surprise upon you to your Ruin, as it will be upon them, in like manner as a Thief breaks in, not only unexpectedly, but with dreadful Havock, upon them that sleep carelesly, without any Thought about it, or being in a fit Posture to prevent the mischievous Consequences of it.

5 *Ye are all the Children of Light, and the Children of the Day: We are not of the Night, nor of Darkness.*

5. On the contrary, ye, who are made wise unto Salvation, (as 'tis meet for me to think of you all according to your holy Profession) are effectually *called* of God *out of Darkness into his marvellous Light:* (1 Pet. ii. 9) Ye are enlighten'd with spiritual Wisdom and Understanding in the Knowledge of Christ, and of God's way of Salvation by him, *that ye may know what is the Hope of his Calling, and what the Riches of the Glory of his Inheritance in the Saints*; (Ephes. i. 17, 18) and that ye may be watchful and wakeful, and walk honourably in the Light of Gospel-truth and Holiness with your Eyes open, and as becomes Persons, that are exposed to public View in the midst of broad Day-light; (*Rom.* xiii. 13) and so may escape the Danger of those, that, under the Power of Sin, Error and Unbelief, walk in such Ways of *Darkness*, as *not to know whither they are going:* (John xii. 35.) We, who are thus made Light in the Lord, are neither cover'd with the Shadows of Judaism, nor with the Darkness of Heathenism, nor with the natural Darkness and Blindness of our own Minds, as others still are, and we ourselves once were. (*Ephes.* v. 8.)

6 *Therefore let us not sleep as* do *others; but let us watch and be sober.*

6. Being therefore brought into this happy State, Let us take heed that we never give way to a slothful, careless and indolent Frame of Spirit, as others do, who are still in their Sins, and to whom our Lord's coming to Judgment will be a dreadful Surprise to their everlasting Confusion: But let it be our great Concern that, suitable to our Character, as enlighten'd by the Gospel and Spirit of Christ, we maintain a wakeful Temper of Mind, to watch over our own Hearts and Ways, and watch against Sin and Temptations, and for the coming of our Lord; and that we be modest in our Thoughts of ourselves, and moderate in our Cares and Pleasures, relating to the present World, as those that are expecting his glorious Appearance, and are ready and prepared for it.

7 *For they that sleep, sleep in the Night; and they that be drunken, are drunken in the Night.*

7. For as they, who give themselves up to Sleep, choose the Night for it, that their Rest may not be disturbed by the Noise and Business of the Day; and they who drink to an Excess, and Intoxication of the Brain, ordinarily do it under the Covert of the Darkness of the Night, that they may not be exposed to Shame in the Day-time; so they that indulge to carnal Security, and surfeit themselves with the

Cares

Cares and Pleasures of this World, to stupify and drown all Thoughts of a Judgment to come, till it overtakes them, before they are aware; (*Luke* xxi. 34) These are under the Power of, and don't care to be disturbed in, the most dangerous Security, that proceeds from, and is agreeable to, the Darkness of Ignorance, Error and Sin, that covers them.

8 But let us who are of the Day, be sober; putting on the Breast-plate of Faith and Love, and for an Helmet, the Hope of Salvation.

8. But let us, who are surrounded with the Light of Gospel-Truth and Grace, which shines in our Hearts, be vigilant, (νήφωμεν) and moderate in our Affections to, and Pursuit of the Things of this World, like those that look for the coming of our Lord: And as we are in a State of Warfare, Let us, like Soldiers and Centinels, that are arm'd with Breast-plates and Helmets, to secure the principal Seats of the natural Life, put on, and daily make use of our Christian-Armour, especially such Parts of it, as are necessary for defending our spiritual Vitals against all mortal Wounds from Sin, Satan, and this evil World; that an Exercise of Faith in Christ, and in God through him, according to his Promises, and of Love to him and one another, by which Faith works, may be like a Breast-plate to defend the Heart; and that a well-grounded, solid and satisfying Hope of eternal Life, through Jesus Christ, may be like a Helmet to cover and secure the Head in every Day of Battle, till we come off more than Conquerors through him, that hath loved us. And we have the greatest Encouragement to this Hope, and to be diligent in the Discharge of all the foremention'd Duties.

9 For God hath not appointed us to Wrath, but to obtain Salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

9. For it appears by what God, in the Riches of his Grace, has already done for and in us, who are *the Children of Light*, (ver. 5) that he has not ordained us to Destruction, as he righteously has those Vessels of Wrath, who fit themselves for it by their own Iniquities; (See the Note on *Rom.* ix. 23) but that, having of his own free and sovereign Grace *chosen us in Christ before the Foundation of the World, that we should be holy, and without Blame before him in Love,* (Ephes. i. 4) he has determin'd to deliver us, as Vessels of Mercy, from deserved Misery, and to bring us to the Enjoyment of a glorious State of immortal Bliss, through the Merits and Mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

10 Who died for us; that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

10. Who died in our Room and Stead, to take away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself, that, by the Merit and Efficacy of his Death, we who believe in him, whether we be among those that shall be alive upon Earth, or sleeping in Jesus at his appearing to Judgment, may be caught up together in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air; and so may live in Union and Communion, and together with him, in all the Dignity and Delights of the heavenly State for ever. (*Chap.* iv. 13, 17.)

11. There-

11 *Wherefore, comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.*

11. Therefore in Reflection upon, and assured Hope of this blessed Day, Think and talk over these Things, as I said before, (*Chap.* iv. 18) to the Comfort of you own and one anothers Souls; and in this Way help forward your mutual Edification *, as one Body, for the Benefit of the Whole, that ye may *grow up together as a holy Temple in the Lord*, (Ephes. ii. 21) with a View to this one Thing, namely, your living together with *him*, which will be the Consummation of all your Happiness, even as ye have already began to do.

12 *And we beseech you, Brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you:*

12. And as they, who minister in sacred Things, are the ordinary Means and Instruments, that Christ has appointed, and blesses for Edification in Light and Grace, Comfort and Holiness, unto complete Salvation, We, dear Brethren, earnestly intreat you to converse freely with, own and honour, and shew your Liberality, Love and Respect to his faithful Servants, and their holy Ministrations, who reside, and take Pains in his Work, among you, for the Good of your Souls; and especially those, who, by Christ's Commission, are placed in Authority under him to preside and rule over you, not in temporal, but spiritual Concerns; and *that*, not according to Laws of their own making, but according to his Word, for promoting his Kingdom and Glory, according to the Gifts and Graces he has furnished them with; and who in the Discharge of their Office, as Occasions require, warn you against all Sin, Error and Danger, and reprove what is amiss among you, and exhort, counsel and encourage you to persevere in the Ways of Truth, Sobriety and Godliness, till ye shall *receive the End of your Faith, even the Salvation of your Souls.* (1 Pet. i. 9.)

13 *And to esteem them very highly in Love for their Works Sake.* And *be at Peace among yourselves.*

13. And we thus recommend them, and their Services, to your honourable Esteem and affectionate Regards, not merely for what is due to them as Christians, but (ὑπὲρ ἐκπερισσοῦ) in a superabundant Manner, on account of the Dignity and Importance of the Work, they are employ'd in for the Glory of God and your spiritual Advantage: And as ever ye would not dishonour Christ, nor grieve them, nor his Spirit in them, nor prevent your own profiting by their Labours, Study the Things that make for Harmony, Peace and Friendship with one another, and with them that are set over you in the Lord, that *the God of Love and Peace may be with you.* (Ephes. iv. 3, and 2 Cor. xiii. 11.)

14 *Now we exhort you, Brethren, warn them that are*

14. Now, dearly beloved Brethren, to draw towards a Close of this Epistle, We earnestly beseech both Ministers and People among you, in their respective Places, to ad-

* As the Words (εἰς τὸν ἕνα) *one another* signify also *into one*, and admit of various Constructions, they are attended to in the Paraphrase.

monish

unruly, comfort the Feeble-minded, support the Weak, be patient toward all Men.

monish those of their Faults, that don't keep their Rank, ([illegible]) or act any way disorderly in their Walk with the Church, or in their Families, and Conversation in the World: Warn them of their Sin and Danger, of the Dishonour they bring upon their holy Profession, and of the pernicious Influence of their Example; and endeavour, in a Spirit of Meekness and Love, to reclaim them: Do all that in you lies to encourage and comfort Fellow-christians, that are of a timorous and dejected Spirit, ready to give way to melancholy and despairing Thoughts, and to faint under their Fears and Afflictions: Deal tenderly with, and endeavour to strengthen the Weak in Faith and Understanding, and to uphold them from stumbling and falling, who are in danger of it, rather through Infirmity, than any evil Disposition of Mind: And exercise all Long-suffering and Forbearance, as far as the Nature of Things permits, and as may be most likely to answer valuable Ends, toward Persons of all these Characters, yea, and towards all Men, whether Friends or Enemies, Christians or not.

15 *See that none render Evil for Evil unto any* Man; *but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all* Men.

15. How ill soever others treat you, Keep a Guard upon your own angry and resenting Passions; and let none of you dare to seek private Revenge, to be even with, and retaliate Mischief upon the Head of any one, that shall injure you; but, on the contrary, *overcome Evil with Good*; (Rom. xii. 17, 19, 20, 21) and be always studying, and pursuing whatsoever is kind, useful and beneficial, both one towards another, as Fellow-christians, and even towards all Mankind, as Fellow-creatures, *doing Good to all, as ye have Opportunity, and especially to the Houshold of Faith.* (Gal. vi 10.)

16. *Rejoice evermore.*

16. As to *personal* Duties, that are to be added to the foregoing which are *relative*, Labour after a cheerful Frame of Spirit, for the Credit of Religion and your own Comfort, that ye may rejoice in the Lord, in what he is in himself, and in what he has done, is doing, and will do for you; and rejoice in Hope of his Glory at all Times, in the Day of Adversity, as well as of Prosperity.

17 *Pray without ceasing.*

17. Under a humble Sense of your intire Dependence upon God, as Creatures, and as Christians, of the Imperfections of your spiritual State, and the Afflictions of various Kinds that ye are attended with, or liable to, and of your Need of further Mercies, of a spiritual and temporal Nature, see that ye abound in daily Prayer, every Morning and Evening, (See the Note on 2 *Tim.* i. 3) and be instant in it at all other Times, as there may be special Occasions and Opportunities for it; and ever maintain a praying Frame of Spirit for solemn Addresses to God, and great Frequency of holy Ejaculations, to mingle with all other Duties of the civil and religious Life, and to guard you against Temptations to Sin, and Dangers of every Kind.

18 *In every thing give Thanks: For this is the Will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*

18. In Reflection upon your being unworthy of the least of all God's Mercies, and upon the Riches of his free Goodness and undeserved Grace, in loading you with Benefits, that over-balance all your Afflictions, Labour to keep up a thankful Frame of Heart, and to go into lively Exercises of it, in every Condition of Life: (See *Ps.* xxxiv. 1, and *Phil.* iv. 6.) For this is a grateful Tribute, which God in a special Manner requires of you for his own Honour, and takes Pleasure in, through Jesus Christ, and has laid you under the highest Obligations to, on account of his Love to you, and of what he has done for you by the great Redeemer.

19 *Quench not the Spirit.*

19. As these excellent and important Duties can't be discharged, in a right Manner, without divine Influence, Take heed of neglecting, stifling and extinguishing the Gifts, Graces and Operations of the Holy Spirit, that are compared to Fire; (*Mat.* iii. 11) but be watchful and diligent to fall in with, cherish and improve his gracious Illuminations, Suggestions, Motions and Assistances, as well as his extraordinary inclusive of his ordinary Gifts *, to excite you to, and enable you for every good Work, and to warm your Hearts with sacred Fervor in performing it.

20 *Despise not Prophesyings.*

20. As the Word and Spirit go together, according to God's Promise, (*Is.* lix. 21) and all the Operations of the Spirit are by means of, or according to his Word, Don't treat the Prophecies of the Old or New Testament with Contempt, as if there were nothing in them for your Instruction and Edification; nor ought ye to neglect, or think lightly of the appointed and authorised Ministrations of God's Word to explain and enforce it, whether by an extraordinary Gift, or not.

21 *Prove all Things; hold fast that which is good.*

21. As false Teachers are gone abroad in the World, (1 *John* iv. 1) Don't take any thing ye hear upon Trust, or receive it with an implicit Faith; but examine, try and prove the Truth, or Falshood, of all the Doctrines and Practices, that are preached, (*ver.* 20) by the Standard of the Word, (*Is.* viii. 20) in a humble Dependence on the Light and Influence of the Holy Spirit, (*ver.* 19) to enable

* I can by no means confine *quenching the Spirit* here, and *Prophesying* in the next Verse, to the *extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit*, as some do; but find myself constrained, by what goes before and follows after, to think that *quenching the Spirit* includes, or rather chiefly relates to his *ordinary* enlightning, quickning, sanctifying and comforting Operations; and that *Prophesying*, or *Prophecies*, (προφητειας) relates either to Scripture Prophecies, or to Preaching, as it sometimes signifies, whether by Inspiration or not: (See the Note on *Rom.* xii, 6.) For all the other Directions, in this Context, relate to the ordinary Graces and Duties of the Christian-Life, that go into the common Practice of Religion, and not to any extraordinary Gifts; and it seems very unnatural, and unlike the close and pertinent Way of our Apostle's Writing, to suppose that Things of so different a Nature should be chiefly, much more only intended, when introduced in the midst of a Series of Exhortations to the Exercise of ordinary Graces and Duties, that belong to all Christians of every Age, as such.

you

you to form a right Judgment concerning them: And when, upon Trial, ye find what is really good and honourable, (καλὸν) in point of Truth or Duty, Indulge no longer a sceptical Temper about it; but maintain and abide by it, in the Stedfastness of your Faith, and Practice of your Lives, rejecting every thing that is contrary to it.

22 *Abstain from all Appearance of Evil.*

22. In this Manner, Keep at the farthest Distance possible from all Error and Sin of every Kind, under what specious Appearances soever they be presented to you; and even from every thing, that you suspect to be false, or sinful, or tending to draw yourselves or others into any Sin or Error.

23 *And the very God of Peace sanctify you wholly: And* I pray God *your whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

23. And may that God himself, who is reconciled to you by the Blood of Christ, and is the Author, Giver and Approver of Peace one with another, and in your own Consciences, and of all Manner of Prosperity; May he thoroughly purge your whole Persons from all Iniquity, and make you eminently Partakers of his Holiness *! And I earnestly beg of him, that all the Powers and Faculties of your rational and immortal Souls; and the whole Frame of your animal Spirits, sensitive Appetites and natural Tempers; and all the Members of your Bodies may be cured of every sinful Irregularity and Disorder, in their Propensions and Operations, and may be continually kept unreprovable, (ἀμέμπτως) as to any predominant Vice, until, and may be found intirely free from all Defects, at the second appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, *when he will present you to himself a glorious Church, not having Spot, or Wrinkle, or any such Thing.* (Ephes. v. 27.)

24 *Faithful* is *he that calleth you, who also will do* it.

24. My Prayer for this, on your Behalf, is with Faith and assured Hope, that he, who hath effectually *called you*, by his Grace, *to his Kingdom and Glory*, (Chap. ii. 12) will also, in Faithfulness to his Promises, carry on and perfect all that concerns you, in the Way and by the Means of his own Appointment. (See *Phil.* i. 6.)

25 *Brethren, pray for us.*

25. As we, Christ's ministring Servants, thus affectionately pray for you, We earnestly beg that ye, our Christian-brethren, would, in Return, be mindful of us in all your Prayers, (which we greatly esteem and need) that God would

* *Your whole Spirit, Soul and Body*, has a manifest Reference to the received Doctrine of the *Pythagorean*, *Platonic*, and *Stoic* Philosophers, who considered Man as consisting of three Parts; of a rational, and animal or sensitive Soul, distinct from one another, and of a Body, distinct from both, which seems to be agreeable to the Account of the Creation of Man in Gen. ii. 7, where 'tis said, that *God formed Man*, his Body, *of the Dust of the Earth, and breathed into Him the Breath of Life*, or *Lives*, (חיים) *and*, by means of this Union, *Man became a living Soul*. Partaker of a sensitive, as well as of a rational Life: And as *the natural Temper* very much depends upon the different Texture and Motion of the *animal Spirits*, I have included *that* under the *sensitive* Soul.

be with us in our Work to assist, own and succeed us, and to perform all things for us, in us, and by us, that we may be faithful in the Discharge of our difficult and important Trust, and may receive the Crown of Glory from the chief Shepherd at his appearing. (1 *Pet.* v. 4.)

26 Greet all the Brethren with an holy Kiss.

26. Let our most affectionate and religious Respects be presented to all our Christian-Brethren; and see that ye give usual Testimonies of cordial Love one to another, by mutual Salutations, in the most sincere, pious, chaste and friendly Manner. (See the Note on *Rom.* xvi. 16.)

27 I charge you by the Lord, that this Epistle be read unto all the holy Brethren.

27. The Contents of this Epistle, as well as all the inspired Writings, are of so great Importance, and of such general Use and Concernment, to the whole Church, that I solemnly enjoin those of you, into whose Hands it may come; yea, I adjure you, as by a religious Oath. (ὁρκίζω ὑμᾶς) in the Name, and by the Authority of the Lord Jesus †, that it be not concealed from any of its Members, but be distinctly and plainly read to all, and every one of them, who ought to live and walk in Love, as dear Brethren, and as a peculiar People zealous of good Works, whom Christ has purified to himself, as I charitably believe of them, according to their holy Profession.

28 The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

28. To conclude with a parting Prayer for you, May the free Favour of our anointed Lord and Saviour, and all its blessed Fruits and Effects, abound towards every one of you, for your present Edification and Growth in Light and Grace, Love and Peace, Comfort and Holiness, till all shall be completed in eternal Salvation. So I sincerely desire it may be, and so I trust it will be, in Testimony of which, I heartily say, *Amen.*

RECOLLECTIONS.

How much more does it concern us, to be always ready for Christ's coming to Judgment, than to indulge curious Enquiries, when it shall be! It will be a terrible Surprize to some, that vainly promise themselves Peace and Safety, when certain and sudden Destruction will come upon them, e'er they are aware. But what a joyful Day will it be to true Believers! They are not involved in spiritual Darkness, like others; but are the Children of Light, whom God hath not appointed to Wrath, but to obtain eternal Salvation through a Redeemer: And as he has called them by his Grace, and is at Peace with them through the Blood of Christ, he will sanctify them throughout, and faithfully perfect all that concerns them, till the Day of Christ, that they may live together with him, who died for them. But as this is to be brought about in the Use of proper Means, How careful should they be to shake off Sloth! They should watch and be sober, and live in the daily Exercise of

† The Apostle's solemn *Charge that his Epistle should be read to all the holy Brethren*, or Members of the Church, is an evident Confutation of the Doctrine and Practice of Popery, in forbidding the common People to read the Scriptures; and it equally condemns their having the Scriptures only in an *unknown Tongue*, which, in Effect, is much the same, as not having them at all.

Faith,

Faith, Love and Hope; and cultivate an holy Peace among themselves, to mutual Edification and Comfort; should deal tenderly and faithfully one with another; and pray for, and pay all due Regard to those, that labour among them in the Word and Doctrine, and are set over them in the Lord, to counsel, caution and encourage them in their Way to Heaven: They should take heed of despising, or neglecting their holy Ministrations, and of stifling the Light and Impressions of the Spirit that attend them. And, having tried and proved all Points of Religion by the Word of God, they should hold fast the Truth, as it is in Jesus, and be ever Followers of that which is good amongst themselves, and towards all Men; should abstain from angry and revengeful Passions, and from all Appearance of Evil; and ever maintain a joyful, prayerful and thankful Frame of Spirit, and give all becoming Testimonies of cordial Love and Friendship one towards another.——What a Privilege is it to have the free Use of the Scripture, for learning these and every Christian-Doctrine and Duty, that we may be taught to profit by them! May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all! *Amen.*

A PRAC-

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF THE *Second* Epiſtle of the Apoſtle PAUL to the *THESSALONIANS.*

In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The Preface to the *Second* Epiſtle to the THESSALONIANS.

THIS Second Epiſtle to the *Theſſalonians* is generally, and moſt probably, thought to have been wrote, in leſs than two Years after the former, by the Apoſtle *Paul* from *Corinth*, where he ſtill continued; and, as ſeems from *Chap*. i. 3. and ii. 2. and iii. 11, had received ſome further Account of the State of their Affairs; and thereupon wrote this Epiſtle to commend, encourage and comfort them under their Sufferings for the Goſpel; and to rectify their Miſconſtruction of what he had ſaid in his former Epiſtle about the coming of Chriſt, as if he meant that his ſecond glorious appearing to Judgment were juſt at hand; as alſo to correct the Diſorders of ſome among them, that were too much inclined to an idle Life, and might, poſſibly, grow more and more negligent of ſecular Affairs from their miſtaken Notion, as though the End of all Things were at hand, and might be tempted to reject the whole Goſpel, as a Forgery, when they ſhould live to ſee themſelves diſappointed of the Expectation, which they had built upon one of its ſuppoſed Prophecies of ſo important an Event.

The Apoſtle begins with his uſual Inſcription and Salutation; and, to encourage their Patience under Tribulations for Chriſt, expreſſes his Thankfulneſs to God for their Growth in Grace, which wou'd be crown'd with eternal Glory, when Chriſt ſha'l appear to their Joy, and the Deſtruction of his and their Enemies, *Chap*. i. He then exhorts them to Stedfaſtneſs of Faith in Chriſt; and undeceives them

 with

with respect to their mistaken Apprehensions of his speedily coming to Judgment, which he tells them wou'd not be, 'till after the Days of Anti-christian Apostacy; from which he blesses God that they should, and prays that they might, be preserved, to their Comfort and Establishment, *Chap.* ii. And he concludes with desiring their Prayers, and with Expressions of his Confidence that, answerable to his Prayers for them, they should be established, and would yield Obedience to the apostolic Commands in all Things; adding Exhortations to withdraw themselves from such Members of the Church, as did not act up to the Dignity of their Christian-Character after the Example, which he had set them, and *that* particularly with respect to Industry in their several Stations; charging the Church to be faithful, prudent and tender in admonishing disorderly Walkers; and closing all with his good Wishes and affectionate Benediction, with which he usually concluded his Epistles, *Chap.* iii.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

The Apostle salutes the Church at Thessalonica, *ver.* 1, 2. *Blesses God for the growing State of their Love and Patience,* 3, 4. *And encourages them to persevere therein under all their Sufferings for Christ, in Consideration of his Coming at the great Day of Account, to execute righteous Judgment upon his and their Enemies, and to be glorified in their own complete Salvation, which the Apostle hoped and prayed for on their Behalf,* 5—12.

TEXT.

1 PAUL, *and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the Church of the Thessalonians, in God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

2 *Grace unto you, and Peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

3 *We are bound to thank God always for you, Brethren, as it is meet, because that your Faith groweth exceedingly, and the Charity of every one of you all towards each other aboundeth.*

4 *So that we ourselves glory in you in the Churches of God, for your Patience and Faith in all your Per-*

PARAPHRASE.

1, 2. PAUL, with *Silas* and *Timothy*, who assisted him in planting the Gospel among you, the Church at *Thessalonica*, (Acts xvii. 4, 14) which is constituted of Believers in God, as the only living and true God, in Distinction from all the Idols of the Heathen, and as our Covenant God and Father; and of Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only true Messiah, in Distinction from all Pretenders to that Character, whom the unbelieving *Jews* vainly expect. We join in sending a second Epistle, and in the most affectionate Christian-Salutations, as we did in the former, (See the Note on 1 *Cor.* i. 1.) cordially wishing and praying, that the divine Favour, with all its special Manifestations, Fruits, and Effects, and every kind of Prosperity, that can be included in the Term *Peace*, relating to God, yourselves and others, may abound towards all, and every one of you, by the free Gift of God our Heavenly Father, as the original Fountain of it, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the only Mediator, by and through whom 'tis communicated, and rendered effectual for your present and eternal Happiness.

3. We, reflecting on what we have further heard of the Grace of God toward you, feel ourselves to be sweetly constrained unto continual thankful Acknowledgments of it for his Glory; and to bless his holy Name on your Behalf, dear Brethren, as it becomes us, and we are bound in Duty to do; because your Faith, which his Spirit wrought in you, by Means of our Ministry, (1 *Epist.* i. 5. and ii. 1.) is carried on, and exceedingly improved, by his continued Aid and Influence, in its Light, Strength and lively Exercise; and your brotherly Love, as the Fruit of this remarkably growing Faith, is proportionably increasing in its Fervor, and all suitable Expressions and Demonstrations of it, in every one of you towards each other.

4. So eminent and exemplary are these Graces in you; and your Behaviour under the greatest Trials of them is so becoming the Gospel, that we think of, and mention you with high Esteem, Honour and Delight in all the Churches of the living God, where-ever we come, for your Firmness of

ſecutions and Tribulations that ye endure:

of Mind, calm Submiſſion and holy Reſolution, as well as ſtrong and lively Faith, which produces them, in bearing up with a truly Chriſtian-Spirit, and ſtedfaſt Adherence to Chriſt and the Goſpel, under all the ſevere Perſecutions and Afflictions of every Kind, that ſtill attend you for his Sake, as they did when ye firſt received the Word with Joy in the Holy-Ghoſt (1 *Theſſ.* i. 6, 7.)

5 Which is *a manifeſt Token of the righteous Judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God for which ye alſo ſuffer:*

5. This carries a plain Demonſtration (ἔνδειγμα) of God's having judged right, in permitting you to be exerciſed with theſe Troubles, which turn ſo much to his Glory, and your own ſpiritual Benefit; and 'tis an evident Proof that there is a juſt and impartial Judgment to come, which will ſet all Things to rights, that ye may be deemed fit and meet Subjects to inherit that heavenly Kingdom, which God hath prepared for you from the Foundation of the World: (*Mat.* xxv. 34.) And 'tis on account of your profeſs'd Expectation of this, through Jeſus Chriſt, according to the Goſpel, that your Enemies are ſo ſevere upon you; and by the Hope of this ye are animated to ſuffer all Hardſhips with Cheerfulneſs and Patience, without fainting under them, (See the Notes on 2 *Cor.* iv. 17.) as believing that the Iſſue of all will be to your unſpeakable Joy, and their inſupportable Miſery;

6 *Seeing* it is *a righteous Thing with God to recompenſe Tribulation to them that trouble you;*

6. For as much as 'tis ſuitable to the Rectitude of God's Nature and Will, Law and Government, who will judge the World in Righteouſneſs, and whoſe Judgment is according to Truth, to inflict the ſevereſt Puniſhment in due Time upon them, that now cruelly perſecute you; and ſo to retaliate juſt *Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguiſh upon them*, that now unjuſtly vex and diſtreſs you: (*Rom.* ii. 2, 5, 8, 9.)

7 *And to you who are troubled, reſt with us, when the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels,*

7, 8. And 'tis a righteous Thing with God, on Chriſt's Account, and in Performance of his Covenant with him and his Members, to give you (ἄνεσιν) a Releaſe and Diſmiſſion, in due Time, from all your preſent Tribulations, and an Entrance into a State of perfect Reſt and Peace, together, and in Company with us, his miniſtring Servants, and your Fellow-Sufferers for his Sake; (1 *Theſſ.* iii. iv.) which he aſſuredly will do, when the Lord Jeſus, who has redeemed us by his precious Blood, ſhall be openly manifeſted, and every Eye ſhall ſee him, at his deſcending from Heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour, (*Phil.* iii. 20.) with a grand Retinue of all his Holy-Angels, who excel in Strength, and were created by, and for him, and ſhall attend to do his Will, as his Miniſters in that Day. (*Mat.* xiii. 49, 50, and xxiv. 31.) And he ſhall be revealed in the

8 *In flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not*

moſt auguſt and tremendous Manner, as coming with Flames of Fire all around him, to burn up the Earth, and the Wicked that are therein; (2 *Pet.* iii. 10.) and to execute Wrath on all thoſe, that continue in their Sins, Stran-

the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

gers to the true Knowledge of God, and rebellious against the Light of Nature, like the *Gentiles*, that did not glorify him as God; and on all those that are disobedient to the gracious Calls of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in his Gospel, like the unbelieving *Jews*, and all that reject him.

9 *Who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power;*

9. Both these Sorts of Sinners shall be severely punished, not by an Annihilation of their Being, but by an eternal Loss of all Happiness; by a total Banishment from his blissful Presence, and from all the glorious Effects of his saving Power, which will be manifested in the Saints, (*ver.* 10.) and by suffering the greatest Miseries in Soul and Body from his own immediate Hand, who is every where present in Being and Operation, and from terribly glorious Impressions of his Almighty Power upon them.

10 *When he shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our Testimony among you was believed) in that Day.*

10. This is what he will certainly do to the utter Confusion and Ruin of his and your Enemies, at the very Time when he will appear to your Joy, and will come to be glorified in a faithful Performance of all his Promises unto the complete Salvation of his peculiar People, who are sanctified by Faith in him, and to be glorified by them in their exalted Praises for it; and shall come to be adored by all true Believers with Transports of joyful Astonishment, and with humble and thankful Wonder at his Grace, and at the great and glorious Things he has done for and in them, which will reflect a Glory upon him; and this will be with envious Amazement of their Enemies to see them, whom they so much despised and oppressed before, so highly favoured and honoured by their great Lord, in the Day of Judgment; because they will then be found among those, that cordially embraced the Testimony, that we his Servants gave to his Person and Offices, and to his final Appearance, in our preaching the Gospel, which will be eminently confirmed, as the Truth of God, to their richest Advantage in that Day.

11 *Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of* this *Calling, and fulfill all the good Pleasure of* his *Goodness, and the Work of Faith with Power:*

11. And according to our Hope of your escaping all the Terrors, and sharing in all the Blessedness and Glory of that important Day, we are continually recommending you in our stated, earnest and affectionate Prayers to the God of all Grace, whom we humbly claim as our Covenant-God, that he wou'd carry on, and perfect his good Work in your Souls, to make you meet and fit Persons, in his gracious Account, to inherit all the Blessings of his Kingdom of Glory, (*ver.* 5.) to which he hath called you by the Gospel; and that he wou'd fill up (πληρώσῃ) what yet remains to be fulfill'd of all the free and sovereign Purposes of his Kindness, Love and Grace toward you, and his eminently good Work of Faith in you, unto all patient, confirm'd and lively Exercises, and still further Increases of it, and of its Fruits of Righteousness, till it be finished by the powerful Operation of his Spirit in you.

12. That

12 *That the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the Grace of our God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

12. That so the Person, Authority and Doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ may be highly exalted in your Esteem, and in their happy and glorious Effects upon you, and may be glorified in Heart and Life by you; and that ye may arrive at the most glorious State of perfect Joy and Praise, by Virtue of your Union with him, according to the free Favour of our gracious God, who hath appointed you to it, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, who hath purchased it for you, promised it to you, and will bestow it upon you.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How solemn and august will Christ's Appearance to Judgment be at the last Day! How tremendous to Sinners! And how transporting to Believers! He will then be visibly seen, as coming from Heaven with awful Majesty, and surrounding Hosts of Angels; a Flame of Fire will go before him to devour his Enemies; and he will execute the righteous Judgment of God in taking dreadful Vengeance on those, that stifle the Light of Nature, and rebel against the clearer Light of the Gospel of Christ, and on all the Persecutors of his Church and People: They shall be banished his blissful Presence, and punished with immediate Impressions of his Almighty Power upon them to their everlasting Destruction. But with what a different Aspect, and to what better Purposes will he, at the same Time, manifest himself to sincere Believers, whose Hearts are purified by Faith! He will come to be glorified and admired in them; and they shall be glorified in and with him, as Members in Union with him. Happy Souls! who are brought cordially to believe the divine Testimony, that is given in the Gospel concerning him, and that shall be confirmed, with a glorious Accomplishment of it to themselves, in the great Day. What Thanks are due to God on their Behalf! How justly may his Servants glory in these Objects of his Love, and in its powerful Effects upon them! And with what Patience, Faith and Hope may they themselves endure all Tribulations that befall them, in View and Prospect of this blessed Day, when the righteous God will, according to his Promise, and the Merit of his Son, make them a rich Amends for all their Sufferings for him! May Grace and Peace be multiplied to them from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ! May all the good Pleasure of God's Goodness, and the Work of Faith be fulfilled in them with Power, by perfecting all that concerns them, in order to their glorifying the Name of Christ in this World, and their being glorified with him in the World to come, according to the Freeness and Riches of the Father and Son's Grace, as revealed in the Gospel!

CHAP. II.

The Apostle cautions the Thessalonians *against an erroneous Notion, as tho' the Time of Christ's coming to the final Judgment were just at hand,* 1, 2. *Assures them that there would first be a general Apostacy from the Faith, and a revealing of the Antichristian-Man of Sin, whom he describes by his Rise, Reign and Ruin, and shows the just Destruction that would come upon his infatuated Subjects, that had Pleasure in Unrighteousness,* 3—12. *But blesses God for the Security of the* Thessalonians *from Apostacy, by Virtue of their eternal Election, and effectual Calling, and thereupon repeats his Exhortation to Stedfastness, and prays for them,* 13—17.

TEXT. / *PARAPHRASE.*

1 *NOW we beseech you, Brethren, by the Coming of our*

1. HAVING now, my dear Christian-Brethren, to encourage and comfort you under all your present Tribulations, reminded you of the glorious Coming of Christ,

Lord Jesus Christ, and by *our gathering together unto him,*

Christ, which will be to your unspeakable Joy, and the everlasting Destruction of all his and your Enemies (*Chap.* i. 6—10.) I, with whom *Silvanus* and *Timothy* join, (*Chap.* i. 1.) proceed to another principal Design of this Epistle, which is to rectify a Mistake, that some have been led into, as tho' Christ were now suddenly coming to Judgment. We therefore earnestly intreat, and solemnly adjure you, by your Belief, Expectation and Desire of the awful Coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to the final Judgment of all Mankind, at the last Day; and by your Hopes of being then gathered together with us, and with all his Saints, in the general Assembly and Church of the First-born, to meet the Lord in the Air, and to be ever with him in his blissful Presence, (1 *Thess.* iv. 17.) * We beseech you to think seriously about an Affair of such vast Importance;

2 *That ye be not soon shaken in Mind, or be troubled, neither by Spirit, nor by Word, nor by Letter, as from us, as that the Day of Christ is at hand.*

2. That ye may not easily, and so soon after the Instructions we have given you relating to it, be misled into any Notions, contrary thereunto, that would disconcert, or stagger your Minds, or throw them into Perplexity and Confusion, by Means of any false Suggestions, that are spread among you, either by mere Pretenders to a Spirit of Prophecy, or by ignorant, or designing Misconstructions of what we have delivered by Word of Mouth, or by Writing in our former Epistle, (*Chap.* iv. 15——18.) or by Appeals to spurious Writings, or Traditions, that are forged and fathered upon us, as though, in one or other of these Ways we had affirmed, or at least given Intimations, from which it might be gathered as our Opinion, that the Day of our blessed Lord's glorious appearing to the final Judgment were just now instantly coming on; whereas no such Thing was ever said, or designed to be suggested by us; and your Belief of it would be of dangerous Consequence, since upon your being disappointed of your Expectation, as ye certainly would, with respect to the *Time* of his coming, ye might be tempted to disbelieve his ever coming at all; and to conclude against the Truth of the whole Gospel itself, of which this is so essential an Article.

3 *Let no Man deceive you by any Means. For* that Day shall not come, *ex-*

3. Take heed that no Man impose upon you, or seduce you into this pernicious Notion, by these or any other Pretences whatsoever; there being no Truth in it: For we now assure you by divine Revelation, that the awful Day

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* That this *Coming of Christ* relates, not to his coming to the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, but to the final Judgment, is very evident; because this is the Sense, in which the Apostle all along speaks of his Coming in this and his former Epistle: (See first *Epist.* ii. 19, and iii. 13, and iv. 13—17, and v. 2, 23, and second *Epist.* i. 6—10.) And as the Preposition (υπερ) with a Genitive Case, often signifies *concerning* or *about*; and the *Ethiopic* Version, and *Theophilact*'s Manuscript renders it *concerning*, the Paraphrase gives a Hint of that Sense; though, with the Generality of Commentators, I prefer the other, which puts (υπερ) *concerning* for (δια) *by*, and seems to set the Meaning of this Passage in the easiest Light, and to be most agreeable to the Apostle's frequent Manner of Adjuration in important Cases, which he also had used in his first Epistle, *Chap.* v. 27.

of

cept there come a falling away firſt, and that Man of Sin be revealed, the Son of Perdition:

of Judgment is at a remoter Diſtance, and will not come, till after there ſhall be a remarkable and general Apoſtacy from the Faith, Worſhip and Holineſs of the Goſpel, and an Antichriſtian-Power, conſiſting of a Succeſſion of impious Men, ſhall be made manifeſt, which for Subtilty and Strength, in countenancing and propagating the vileſt Corruption of Doctrines and Manners, may be fitly ſtiled, by way of Eminence, *that Man of Sin* *, who will ſet up himſelf, and be diſcovered in the plaineſt Characters, by being at the Head of all abominable Wickedneſs, (See the Note on *ver.* 4) under the Chriſtian-Name; who alſo may be called *the Son of Perdition*, as he will cauſe the Deſtruction of the Souls and Bodies of Multitudes, and as he himſelf will be deſtroyed, or *go into Perdition*, and *be caſt into the Lake of Fire and Brimſtone.* (Rev. xvii. 11, and xix. 20.)

4 *Who oppoſeth and exalteth himſelf above all that is called God, or that is worſhipped; ſo that he as God ſitteth in the Temple of God, ſhewing himſelf that he is God.*

4. This Man of Sin is emphatically the great *Antichriſt*, who, conſidering him as arrived at the Height of his temporal and eccleſiaſtical Dignity, is an Oppoſer of Chriſt, in the Perfection and Glory of all his Offices, and a cruel Perſecutor of his Members: He alſo, according to *Daniel's* Prophecy, (*Chap.* xi. 36) magnifies himſelf above, and aſſumes ſovereign Authority over, Kings and Emperors, who, on account of their Office, are ſtiled *Gods*, (Pſ. lxxxii. 1, 6) and in the Title of the *Roman* Emperors, are called *Auguſt*, (σεϐασται) as if they were to be worſhipped; and he exalts himſelf above the Gods of the Heathen, by claiming a greater and more extenſive Power in Heaven, Earth and Hell, than ever was aſcribed to any *one* of them; yea, above the true God himſelf, who is the only Object of religious Adoration, by diſpenſing with his Laws, and ordering, in direct Contradiction to his Command, (*Mat.* iv. 10, ſee the Note there) that religious Worſhip ſhould be paid to Creatures and Images, which is due to God alone; and by requiring a more abſolute Obedience to his own Authority, than to the Commands of God himſelf: So that, as the true God formerly reſided in the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, this grand Antichriſt ſeats himſelf, as on his Throne, in the Church, which is ſpoken of as *the Temple of God:* (1 Cor. iii. 16, 17, and 2 Cor. vi. 16.) And by ex-

* *That Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition,* though mentioned in the ſingular Number, ſignifies not merely any one particular Perſon; but a Succeſſion of Men, in like Manner as the Succeſſion of the *Kings* and *High Prieſts* of *Iſrael* were ſpoken of, as though they had been but one Perſon, in deſcribing their Characters, and the Law concerning them. *Deut.* xvii. 14—20. *Lev.* xxi. 10—15. *Numb.* xxxv. 25, 28, and *Heb.* ix. 7. And this is interpreted to mean any High Prieſt in his Day, and the whole Order of them together is meant by *the High Prieſt*. The ſame alſo may be obſerved with reſpect to *that which withholds* and *he who now lets, and will let, till it be taken away*, ver. 6, 7, which (as many of the antient Fathers underſtood it, and the Event afterwards proved) pointed at the Heathen-*Roman-Empire*, or *Emperors* at the Head of it, in a Succeſſion of them, though the Apoſtle hints this with great Caution, only in a covert Way, to avoid giving Offence to the Emperor, and provoking his Wrath againſt the Chriſtians, as a ſeditious Sort of People, that fomented Notions tending to the Deſtruction of the *Roman*-Empire.

ercising supreme Authority over it, giving Laws to, and receiving divine Titles and Homage from it, in its apostate State, he makes a vain Show, as if he really were God †.

5 Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you these Things?

5. Have ye been so careless as to have forgotten former Notices of these Things? This seems to be the Case with some of you. But can't ye now recollect, ye certainly might, that I *Paul* myself *, when personally preaching to, and conversing with you at *Thessalonica*, gave you sufficient Intimations, that the Day of Christ's coming to Judgment is not just at hand; but that, in the Course of divine Dispensations, there must be first a general Defection from the Faith, and the Rise of the Antichristian-Man of Sin?

6 And now ye know what with-holdeth, that he might be revealed in his Time.

6. And if ye duly reflect upon what I have told you by Word of Mouth, and have now added in this Epistle, ye may easily gather what it is, that at present restrains and hinders the complete Revelation of the Man of Sin, as the Head of the great Apostacy: It may well be supposed in the very Nature of Things, though dangerous to speak it out, (See the Note on *ver.* 3) that it is the Heathen *Roman*-Empire under one political Head, according to the Form in which it now subsists. This must be taken away to make Room for the Introduction of the Head of the Apostacy, that he may be manifested in the Height of his Power and Authority, Pomp and Grandeur, in his proper Season, according to the appointed Time of God for it.

7 For the Mystery of Iniquity doth al-

7. For the great Defection, which may justly be called *the Mystery of Iniquity*, or of *that Wicked One*, (ver. 8) on

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† All these Characters of *the Man of Sin* are plainly applicable to, and exemplified in Popery, inclusive of the Hierarchy of *Rome*, with the Pope at the Head of it, in successive Generations; and fully agree to none, that has appeared in the World, besides them: For they are Monsters of Wickedness, that are guilty of, and patronize cruel Persecutions, perfidious Breaches of Faith, and idolatrous Worship of Saints, Angels and Images; and that encourage all Manner of Iniquity, by pretended Pardons, and Indulgences, and licencing Houses of Debauchery; and they, though not professedly, yet really oppose Christ in all his Offices; In his *prophetic* Office, by teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men; In his *priestly* Office, by the Doctrine of Merit, the Sacrifice of the Mass, and joining Saints and Angels, as Intercessors with Christ: And in his *kingly* Office, by dispensing with his Laws, and setting up the Pope, as the supreme Head of the Church. And some of their Popes have treated Kings and Emperors with insolent Contempt, as their Vassals, to be deposed, or inthroned, at their Pleasure; have excommunicated them, and absolved their Subjects from Allegiance to them: Others have trod on the Necks of Emperors, kick'd off their Crowns with their Feet, and set them on with their Feet again, and obliged them to hold the Pope's Stirrup, when he alighted from, or mounted his Horse. These haughty ecclesiastical Tyrants have set themselves in the Place of God, by assuming Authority over the Souls and Consciences of Men, and admitting of blasphemous Adoration, under the Titles of a *God on Earth*, and *the Lord God the Pope*; and they have exalted themselves even above God himself, by not only repealing his Laws, but making the whole Authority of his Word to depend on the Authority of the Church. These, and such like Things, are notorious in the Church of *Rome*; and the Description here given of her, stands in good Agreement with the Representation that is made of the *Romish* Antichristian-power in the *Revelation*, under the Figures of *Mystery, Babylon, the great Whore that sits on many Waters, the Beast and the false Prophet.*

* The Apostle here refers to what he had said to the *Thessalonians* in his personal Ministry and Conversation, in which it is reasonably supposed, that he had deliver'd more Things, relating to these Points, to which he here appeals, than are to be found, or were proper to be wrote, in his First Epistle to them: Accordingly he speaks, *ver.* 15, of the *Traditions* they had received *by Word*, as well as by his Epistle. (See the Note there.)

account

ready work; only he who now letteth, will let, *until he be taken out of the Way.*

account of the Secrecy and Subtilty of its ſpreading, and the unſearchable Depth of Sin and Error, that is wrapt up in it, and will hereafter more plainly and openly ſhew itſelf, and begins already to diffuſe its malignant Influence in Pride and Worldly-mindedneſs, Will-worſhip and Worſhipping of Angels, and in corrupting the pure Doctrine of Juſtification, as though it were to be by the Works of the Law; and this would quickly appear in all its Power and wide Extent, were it not that the imperial Pagan-Government, which hitherto prevents it, will continue ſo to do, till this Obſtacle be removed.

8 *And then ſhall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord ſhall conſume with the Spirit of his Mouth, and ſhall deſtroy with the Brightneſs of his coming.*

8. And then, thro' the growing Ambition and Luxury of Eccleſiaſticks, under the Protection and Indulgence of Chriſtian Emperors, and by means of the Diviſion of the Empire itſelf into ten Kingdoms, which will give their Power to the Beaſt, (*Rev.* xvii. 12, 13; ſee the Note there) that wicked one will mount the Throne, like a lawleſs Perſon, (ανομος) who will diſpenſe with, and exalt his Authority above, all Laws human and divine, and be ſubject to no Law himſelf: But be it known, for the Comfort of the true Church, that in the divinely appointed Time, he, with all his Hierarchy, Authority and Grandeur, ſhall certainly ſink and fall; whom the Lord Jeſus Chriſt will begin to blaſt by the preaching of the Goſpel in its Purity and Power, and by ſpiriting up a Set of brave Reformers to oppoſe, and proteſt againſt his Supremacy, and all his Corruptions in Doctrine and Worſhip; and he will afterward more eminently ſlay him, and all his Adherents, as with a Sword, by the judicial Sentence, that will proceed from his Mouth, and be executed by his Command, and by his Word and Spirit, when he ſhall ſet up his glorious Kingdom of Truth, Righteouſneſs, Joy and Peace in the Earth; and finally, by his coming to judge the World, and take Vengeance on all his Enemies in their utter Deſtruction at the laſt Day: In theſe various Ways it may be ſaid, in the Language of antient Prophecy, that *he ſhall ſmite the Earth with the Rod of his Mouth; and with the Breath of his Lips he ſhall ſlay the Earth.* (Iſ. xi. 4.)

9 Even him *whoſe coming is after the Working of Satan, with all Power, and Signs, and lying Wonders,*

9. The Manner of this Wicked One's introducing, and ſupporting his Tyranny and Errors, which ſhall at length be deſtroyed, will be in Imitation of *the Father of Lies, who was a Murderer from the Beginning, and abode not in the Truth,* (John viii. 44) and under his Influence, according to the Energy of his Operation, (ενεργειαν) who works effectually (ενεργουντος) *in the Children of Diſobedience:* (Epheſ. ii. 2) And this Wicked One will exert himſelf, for upholding and promoting his abominable Empire, with all his Might, under a Pretence of Power from God for it; and with ſham Pretences to Miracles, and to wonderful Works of a ſupernatural Kind, like what our Lord himſelf performed; (See the Note on *Acts* ii. 22) but which, in this Pretender, are

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all a Cheat to impose upon, and deceive the Nations of the Earth.

10 *And with all Deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the Love of the Truth, that they might be saved.*

10. And, at the Instigation of the diabolical Spirit, the Apostacy will be carried on, under its Papal Head, with all subtle and tricking Arts, managed by the most unrighteous Methods to delude those that comply with them, to their own utter Perdition; because through the Carnality and Corruption of their own Hearts, and the malignant Influence of Satan, which they readily yielded themselves up to, they did not cordially receive Christ in the Whole of his Character, who is the Truth; (*John* xiv. 6.) nor wou'd embrace the Truth and Purity of the Gospel concerning him, with Approbation, that they might obtain Salvation according to, and by Means of that Revelation, which shows the only Way to eternal Life through him.

11 *And for this Cause God shall send them strong Delusion, that they should believe a Lie:*

11. And therefore, as they did not like to retain the Knowledge of the Truth, God in his righteous Judgment, for the Punishment of their Iniquity in its own Kind, will deliver them up to the dreadful Efficacy of Error, (ἐνέργειαν πλάνης) as the chosen Way of their own wicked Inclinations, and to a judicial Hardness of Heart, and the Power of *the God of this World, who blinds their Minds*, (See the Note on *Rom.* ix. 18.) that they might give their free Assent and Consent to delusive Forgeries, Superstitions and Idolatry, fabulous Legends, and monstrous Doctrines and Practices, that have no Truth in them; but are all a Heap of Falshood and lying Vanities;

12 *That they all might be damned who believed not the Truth, but had Pleasure in Unrighteousness.*

12. They shall be justly left to the Power of this foolish and perverse Disposition of their own evil Hearts, that, according to their Deserts, all of them (κριθῶσι) might be judged and condemned, and righteously punished with the most awful Destruction, who disbelieved and rejected Christ, and the Truth of the Gospel; but, on the contrary, were exceeding fond of, and took Delight in all wicked Designs, Words and Deeds, Frauds and Persecutions, as what are most agreeable to their own corrupt Taste.

13 *But we are bound to give Thanks alway to God for you, Brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the Begining chosen you to Salvation, thro' Sanctification of the Spirit, and Belief of the Truth:*

13. But as to you, our dear Christian-Brethren, whom we think of with Pleasure, as those whom the Lord himself peculiarly loves, and will preserve from this dreadful Apostacy, We have this to say for your Comfort, that *in every Remembrance of you*, (Phil. i. 3.) we can't but look upon ourselves, as bound in Duty and Affection to bless God heartily on your Behalf; because we are well satisfied, by what we saw of the powerful Efficacy of the Gospel upon you, when ye first received it, (1 *Thess.* i. 2—5. See the Notes there) and by what we have since heard of its happy and holy Fruits, as they continue still farther to appear in you, (*Chap.* i. 3, 4.) that God, of his own mere Grace, has from the Beginning

of

of the World, yea, from all Eternity,* made a special Choice of you to complete Salvation by Jesus Christ, (1 *Thess.* v. 9.) as the final Happiness, which he design'd to bring you to, through the Renovation of your whole Souls in Knowledge, Righteousness and true Holiness, after the Image of God, which is wrought in you by the Holy Spirit, *without which no Man shall see the Lord*; (*Heb.* xii. 14.) and through a fiducial Trust in Christ, and faithful Adherence to him, according to the Truth of the Gospel-Revelation of him, as God's appointed Way and Means of bringing you safe to Glory; the End and Means being inseparably connected in his Decree, and in the Execution of it.

14 *Whereunto he called you by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the Glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

14. To which Salvation, as to be brought about in this Way, he has now, as the Fruit of electing Love, effectually called you, (*v.* 13, and *Rom.* viii. 30. See the Note there) by our preaching the Gospel, not a Gospel which we are the Authors of, but a Dispensation of which is committed to us, and which is faithfully ministred by us, in Opposition to all other pretended Gospels, (1 *Cor.* ix. 17. and *Gal.* i. 8.) that ye might be thereby brought, through the attending Operation of the Spirit, unto a Title and Claim to, and, at length, the full Enjoyment of that immortal State of Bliss and Glory, which our Lord Jesus Christ has purchased, prepared and taken Possession of, as your Head and Forerunner, for you, and hath promised, and at the last Day will adjudge and bring you to, that ye may behold his Glory, and be made like him, and completely happy with him, in Soul and Body for ever.

15 *Therefore, Brethren, stand fast, and hold the Traditions which ye have been taught, whether by Word, or our Epistle.*

15. In Consideration therefore of what God has thus graciously design'd and done for you, dear Brethren, and of the promised Assistances, which from thence ye may further well expect and depend upon, We earnestly beseech you to stand fast in the Faith, Comfort and Hope, Doctrine, Holiness and Profession of the Gospel; and stedfastly to maintain the important Points of Truth and Duty, † which

* By *from the Beginning* some would understand from the Beginning of the Gospel's being preached to, and received by them: But as, in the next Verse, the Apostle speaks of their being *called by the Gospel*, as a distinct Thing, in Consequence of God's having chosen them from the Beginning, according to what he had said, 1 *Epist.* i. 4, 5. of *knowing their Election of God; because the Gospel came to them, not in Word only, but in Power*, &c. (See the Note there) and as the Phrase *from the Beginning* [illegible] signifies the Beginning of Time, 1 *John* iii. 8; and *from the Beginning* is of the same Import with *from Everlasting*, Prov. viii. 23. and our Apostle speaks of *God's having chosen us in Christ before the Foundation of the World, that we might be holy and without Blame before him in Love*: Ephes. i. 4.) All this shows, that his *calling* the *Thessalonians*, by the Gospel, is to be distinguished from his having *chosen them*; and that his having chosen them *from the Beginning* is to be understood of his having done it *from Eternity*, in pursuance of which *he called them with an holy Calling, not according to their Works, but according to his own Purpose and Grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the World began*. (2 Tim. i. 9, 10.) Vide *Witsii* Oecon. Fœd. Lib. III. cap. 4. §. 21, &c.

† This *holding the Traditions* relates only to such Doctrines as the Apostle and his Fellow-Labourers had delivered to them, pertaining to the only Rule of Faith, Worship and Obedience, by their personal Preaching and Conversation, or by the Writing of this, and the former Epistle; and therefore it can't

which ye have been instructed in by us, the Servants of Christ, (*Chap.* i. 1. and 1 *Thess.* i. 1.) whether by Word of Mouth, while we were with you; or by this, and our former Epistle, which contain an important Part of the Faith, that is *delivered to the Saints*, (Jude, *ver.* 3.) as the only Standard of Doctrines, Worship and Obedience.

16 *Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting Consolation, and good Hope through Grace,*

16. Now, upon the great Encouragement we have to hope well concerning you, as the chosen and called of God, (*ver.* 13, 14.) We earnestly pray, with comfortable Assurance of being heard, that our Lord Jesus Christ himself, as the divine Saviour, who has redeemed us by his Blood, and purchased eternal Glory for us, and will be our Judge at the last Day to confer it upon us; § and that God the Father, even our Covenant-God and Father in him, who, we trust, has loved both you and us with an everlasting Love, and has by Manifestations of it revived our Souls with his Consolations, which are everlasting in their Foundation, Matter, Tendencies and final Issues, tho' not always or alike sensibly enjoy'd, while we are in this present State of Imperfection; and who hath given us freely by his Grace the best of all Hope, even a good Hope of eternal Life, which is solid, scriptural, and well-grounded, and shall never *make us ashamed, because the Love of God is shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given to us*; (Rom v. 5.)

17 *Comfort your Hearts, and stablish you in every good Word and Work.*

17. We, I say, earnestly, and with humble Confidence, beg, that these adorable Persons in the Godhead would, with concurring Agency, according to the respective Parts, which they have voluntarily undertaken in the Oeconomy of Salvation, *fill* your Souls, yet more and more, *with all Joy and Peace in believing, that ye may abound in Hope, through the Power of the Holy Ghost*, (Rom. xv. 13.) and may be comforted under all Troubles, Fears and Dangers; and that they would strengthen and fortify you immoveably, unto all Perseverance in every Doctrine of the Gospel, which brings good Tidings of great Joy; as also in every Sort of sound Speech, which can't be condemned; and in every good Work of Righteousness, with regard to God, yourselves, and one another,

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give the least Countenance to the *oral Traditions* of the Papists, which they pretend have been handed down through many hundreds of Years; but are really stuff'd with such ridiculous and incredible Stories, as neither agree with the Scripture, nor with common Sense: And as, by all these Traditions, they can't point out so much as one of the Particulars, that were delivered to the *Thessalonians* by Word of Mouth from the Apostle, any farther than they are recorded in the New Testament, or may be gathered from thence, 'tis Time enough for us to attend to *their Traditions*, when they can produce Testimonies to them as authentic, and well known to us, as these were to the *Thessalonians*; or can prove them by the Word of God. (See the Note 1 *Cor.* xi. 2.)

§ *Our Lord Jesus Christ* is here considered as the Object of Religious Worship, and the Author of the Blessings that are, implicitly at least, pray'd for from him, in the same Manner equally, and together with the Father, which supposes his proper Divinity, according to the established and unchangeable Law of Worship, as recited by *himself*, *Matt.* iv. 10; and his being mentioned in this Manner, even before the Father, takes off all Pretences of his Inferiority, either in Deity or Worship, on account of the Father's being at other Times mentioned before him.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How exceeding dangerous is it to be misled into mistaken Expectations of Divine Appearances, like that of Christ's immediately coming to Judgment, lest, through Disappointment therein, we should be tempted to disbelieve the whole Gospel, which we thought encouraged them! 'Tis no Wonder that the Promises of Christ's second appearing are not yet fulfilled, since we are assured by the Spirit of Prophecy, that the general Apostacy, under the Man of Sin, or papal Power, which assumes the Prerogatives of God, was first to rise and reign, till it shall be destroy'd by the Spirit of Christ's Mouth, and the Brightness of his coming; and since this Power could not be set up till the Government of the *Roman Cæsars* should be dissolved. But, alas! how dreadful must their Condemnation and Destruction be, whom God in his righteous Judgment gives up to such a Spirit of Delusion, as fondly to believe, and voluntarily comply with, all the Idolatry, Superstition, Tyranny and Corruptions of Popery, which are propagated by Satanical Forgeries, and vain Pretences to miraculous Powers and Signs, that, in reality, are no other than lying Wonders! God righteously suffers the Admirers of these to be deceived by them; because they did not like to embrace the Truth of the Gospel concerning Christ, as the only Mediator, that they might be saved. But O how happy is the State of those, that are secured from these damning Errors, by God's having, in his free Love, chosen them from Eternity to Salvation, through Sanctification of the Spirit, and Belief of the Truth, which stand inseparably connected in the Purpose of God, and in the Execution of it, as the Way and Means of bringing about this glorious End! In order hereunto he effectually calls them, unto the obtaining of the immortal Life, which Christ hath brought to Light by the Gospel, and will advance them to, at the last Day. With what encouraging Hope, and Confidence of a blessed Issue, upon these Grounds, may Believers receive, and stedfastly adhere to, what is deliver'd by inspired Writers; and be earnest in Prayer, that their Lord and Saviour, and their God and Father in him, would give them such Consolation, as is of an everlasting Nature, and such good Hope, through Grace, as shall never disappoint them; but shall be to their abundant Joy, and Establishment in every good Doctrine, Way and Work, till they arrive at heavenly Glory!

CHAP. III.

The Apostle desires Prayer for himself and his Fellow-Labourers; expresses his Confidence in the Thessalonians, *and prays for them,* 1—5. *Charges them to withdraw from disorderly Walkers, and particularly from those, that were lazy, and Busy-bodies, contrary to his Example and Command,* 6—15. *And concludes with a Prayer for them, and with a Salutation and Benediction,* 16—18.

TEXT.

FInally, *Brethren, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free Course, and be glorified even as it is with you;*

PARAPHRASE.

1 NOW, my dear Brethren in Christ, to draw towards a Close of this Epistle, Let me earnestly intreat your fervent Prayers for me, and my Fellow-labourers, such as *Silvanus* and *Timothy*, who join with me in writing to you, (*Chap.* i. 3) that we may be directed, assisted and own'd in our great and difficult Work, for which we are insufficient of ourselves; and that the Gospel of Salvation, of which the Lord Jesus Christ is the Author and principal Subject, may run with Speed and Success, (τρέχῃ) and be

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spread and propagated in its Purity and Power, all around, far and wide, and not hindred in its Progress; but may bear down all Opposition before it, and be received with Honour and Esteem, as of divine Authority, and a glorious Scheme of Salvation; and may produce glorious Effects in the Conversion, Edification and holy Conversation of Multitudes, wherever it is preached, even as it has among you. (See 1 *Thess.* i. 5, 6.)

2 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked Men: For all Men have not Faith.

2. And we in a special Manner beg your Prayers, that we may be kept, or rescued out of the Hands of unbelieving *Jewish Zealots*, and deliver'd from *Perils among false Brethren*, (2 Cor. xi. 26) who are (ἀτόπων) insolently perverse and absurd in their Reasonings, and Prejudices against us, and are maliciously wicked in their Principles and Practices, endeavouring to stop our Mouths, and throw us into Prisons, and would persecute us unto Death: Many of these we meet with wherever we go, as we did at *Thessalonica*: (Acts xvii. 5, and 1 *Thess.* ii. 15, 16, 18) For it's undeniably evident from hence that, even among Professors of Religion and Christianity itself, all of them don't cordially embrace Christ, according to the Truth of the Gospel, by that Faith, which works by Love, and purifies the Heart.

3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from Evil.

3. But though false and hypocritical Pretenders, *who receive not the Love of the Truth that they may be saved*, (Chap. ii. 10) be left of God to themselves, and turn violent Enemies to us and you for the Gospel's Sake; yet ye ought not to be discouraged upon this Account: For *as ye have received the Word of God, not as the Word of Man, but (as it is in Truth) the Word of God, which effectually works also in you that believe*, (1 Thess. ii. 13) so ye may assuredly depend upon his Faithfulness, in making good his Covenant-Promise of persevering Grace, (*Jer.* xxxii. 40) that he will confirm, settle and strengthen you in the Doctrine and Grace of Faith, and in your holy Profession of it, and Practice of Godliness according to it; and will so far preserve and secure you from the Power of Tribulation, Sin and Satan, and all his wicked Instruments, as that none of them shall prevail to your final Destruction.

4 And we have Confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the Things which we command you.

4. And as your Preservation is to be in a Way of holy Obedience; so we have an inward Trust and joyful Confidence in the Lord Jesus concerning you, as Believers in him, and vitally united to him, that through his Grace ye not only hitherto have been, and still are, but shall perseveringly continue to be, obedient in all Things to those Commandments, which we have deliver'd, and may further deliver to you, in his Name, and by his Authority, (*ver.* 6.)

And

5 *And the Lord direct your Hearts into the Love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.*

5. And, according to this our Hope in Christ concerning you, we earnestly pray, that the Lord the Spirit * would, by his Light and Influence, set to rights all the irregular Motions of your Hearts, and carry them more and more in a straight Course, as by a direct Line, (κατευθύναι) into a clear and experimental Acquaintance with the Love of God to you, and into the liveliest Exercises of your Love to him, under a Sense of his having first loved you; (1 *John* iv. 19) as also into affecting and endearing Reflections upon, and imitation of, the wonderful Patience with which Christ endured all his Sufferings for your Sake; and *into a patient Continuance in well doing*, (Rom. ii. 7) under all your Troubles and Dangers for his Sake; and a patient Expectation of his second coming, (1 *Thess.* i. 10) which will e'er long put an End to all your Trials, and make you a rich and everlasting Amends for them.

6 *Now we command you, Brethren, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every Brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the Tradition which he received of us.*

6. Now, dear Brethren in the Lord, having expressed our good Opinion and Hopes concerning you, as a spiritual and holy Body, and the sincere Desire of our Souls for you all, We take this Opportunity to add, that, as we hear some of your Number continue to be idle, and Busy-bodies, (*ver.* 11) notwithstanding the solemn Injunctions we had given to the contrary; (1 *Thess.* iv. 11, 12) so we, in Reflection hereupon, think it high Time to enjoin you, as a Church, by the Authority, and for the Glory of Christ, our common Lord and Saviour, from whom we have received our Commission and Instructions, that ye remove from your holy Communion, and avoid all unnecessary Familiarity and Conversation with every Brother, or Member of your religious Society, of what Rank or Station soever, that lives irregularly, going into, and persisting in such a Course of Laziness, and intermeddling with other Peoples Affairs, as is very injurious to Public and Family-Peace, and dishonourable to the Christian Character; and no way agreeable to the Admonitions, which we have delivered, whether by Word of Mouth, or in our former Epistle; (*Chap.* ii. 15: see the Note there) and exemplified in our own Behaviour, when we were present with you.

7 *For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us. For we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you.*

7. For by these Means, ye yourselves very well know the Manner, in which ye ought to imitate us, and walk answerable to our Directions, as ye chearfully did at your Conversion: (1 *Thess.* i. 6.) For we can appeal, not only to the Lord himself, but even to your own Consciences, as

* *The Lord* here applied to, seems to be best understood of *the Lord the Spirit*, (Κύριος τὸ πνεῦμα) as 2 *Cor.* iii. 18, may properly be render'd: For the Father and Son are spoken of, as Persons distinct from this Lord, who directs the Heart into *the Love of God* the Father, and *the patient Waiting for Christ*, or *Patience of Christ*; (ὑπομονὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ). And the Things here pray'd for, are represented in Scripture, as the special and immediate Work of the Holy Ghost. See *Rom.* v. 5, and *Gal.* v. 15, 22.

our Witnesses, how holily, justly and unblameably, we all along *behaved ourselves among you;* (1 Thess. ii. 10) and how careful we were, not to live at a slothful disorderly Rate, contrary to the Rule of the Word, which we laid before you, when we were at *Thessalonica*.

8 Neither did we eat any Man's Bread for nought; but wrought with Labour and Travail Night and Day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:

8. No, nor did we partake of any one's Food, or table with him, at Free-cost, without paying for it; but earned our Bread before we eat it, by diligent and wearisome Labour with our own Hands, taking abundance of Pains, and undergoing great Fatigues early and late, by Day and Night; sometimes in preaching the Gospel, as we had Opportunity for it, and at others, in working, as Occasions required, at handicraft Trades in several Places, (*Acts* xviii. 3, and xx. 34) and particularly among you, (1 *Thess.* ii. 9. See the Note on 1 *Cor.* ix. 1) that we might provide for ourselves, and not be a Burden to any of you, as some of a covetous Temper, or narrow Circumstances, might have thought us, had we been maintained at their Expence.

9 Not because we have not Power, but to make ourselves an Ensample unto you to follow us.

9. I remind you of this, not as though we had not a just Right by virtue of our Office, according to the Reason of Things, and the Authority of Christ, to insist upon, and even demand a convenient and comfortable Maintenance, in return for our ministerial Labours, as I have asserted and proved at large to others, (1 *Cor.* ix. 4—14) and now mention to you; but we, of our own accord, freely waved all Claims of this Nature, and work'd with our own Hands for a Livelihood, to take off Prejudices against us, as though we were mercenary Cretures, and to propagate the Gospel the more successfully; and particularly to set you a good Example, and (τυπον δωμεν υμιν) give you a Pattern of Industry in your several Callings, that ye might be excited, and even constrained to imitate us therein, as well as to follow our Precepts relating to it.

10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

10. For, having observed Appearances of a lazy Temper in some, even when we were among you, we strictly commanded you all in general, that if any one of your new Christian-brotherhood, who is able to work for his Living, would not take due Pains to provide for himself and his Family, if he has one, his Indolence and Sloth should not be indulged by affording him a Maintenance out of the Charity of the Church, which ought to be applied to the Relief and Comfort of such of their Poor, as through Sickness or Age, or Decay of Nature, or any other Means, are incapable of doing any Thing for their own Supply. And ye need not wonder, that we, now again, so strenuously urge this Point upon you.

11 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, work-

11. For we have been credibly inform'd, after all that has been said and wrote about it, that there are some idle Members of the Church, who walk irregularly, in direct Contradiction, not only to our express Injunctions, and the general

ing not at all, but are Busy-bodies.

general Rule of Christianity, which establishes all the Duties of the Civil Life; but even to the Moral Law itself, (*Exod.* xx. 11) and to the order of all political and religious Societies, and of the Creation, and the present Condition of Man, who was formed for Activity and Business in his original State, and was doom'd to *eat his Bread in the Sweat of his Brows*, after the Fall: (*Gen.* ii. 15, and iii. 19.) These, going out of their Rank, (ἀτάκτως) like loose Soldiers, don't care to be employ'd in their proper Callings, or in any useful Services at all; but, as is common with such Sort of People, they waste their Time in gadding abroad, and sauntring about, and curiously prying, and officiously thrusting themselves into, and making their idle Remarks upon other Peoples Matters, which they have no Call to meddle with; but which they busy themselves about, to the great Disturbance of particular Persons, Families and Neighbours, and the creating of Jealousies, Misunderstandings and Quarrels between Friends, and setting them at Variance by their tatling and tale-bearing Humour, which makes them perfect Incendiaries, and the Nusance and Pest of all Company, wherever they come.

12 *Now them that are such, we command, and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with Quietness they work and eat their own Bread.*

12. Now, whosoever they be, that are of this slothful and pernicious Disposition and Behaviour, We again solemnly charge them by divine Authority; and earnestly intreat them by the endearing Love of Christ, our great Lord and Master, and for his Sake, as ever they would avoid his Displeasure, and honour their Profession of his Name, that, according to our former Exhortation, (1 *Thess.* iv. 11, see the Note there) they would study to be quiet, and do their own Business, with a meek and peaceable Frame of Spirit, and set themselves diligently to work with their own Hands, in their respective Stations; and so, by the Blessing of God on their honest Labour, may provide such Food for themselves and theirs, as they have duely earned, and bought with their own Money, that they may be beholden to no one's Charity for their Subsistence; and that, instead of being burdensome to others, they may *have to give to him that needs.* (Ephes. iv. 28.)

13 *But ye, Brethren, be not weary in well-doing.*

13. But as for those of you, dear Brethren, who, to the Honour of your Christian-Character, have minded your own Business, and not officiously meddled with other Peoples Affairs, We beseech you to persist unweariedly, and without Reluctance, in a diligent Discharge of the civil, as well as religious Duties of your respective Stations; and particularly in doing good, with all Chearfulness and Liberality, to the industrious, and yet necessitous Poor among you; (*Gal.* vi. 9, 10) tho' ye ought to withhold your Charity from such, as are able, but not willing, to work for their own Livelihood. (*ver.* 10.)

14 *And if any Man obey not our*

14. And if there still be any slothful Person of your Community, who pays no Regard to, nor is reformed by the Com-

Word by this Epistle, note that Man, and have no Company with him, that he may be ashamed.

Commandments and Exhortations, that we have delivered by Christ's Authority, as before, so in this Epistle, relating to such; (*ver.* 6, 10, 12) 'Tis your Duty, as a Church, to set a Brand of Infamy upon him, by casting him out, as an unworthy Member; and not to countenance him afterwards, by an Intimacy of Friendship, or unnecessary Familiarity in Conversation with him, (ἵνα ἐντραπῇ) to the End that, by your shy and cool Carriage toward him, he may turn inwards, and blush and be ashamed, in Reflection on his Sin; and, through divine Grace, may be brought to repent of it, and to loath and abhor himself for it, with full Purpose of Heart to depart from it.

15 *Yet count* him *not as an Enemy, but admonish* him *as a Brother.*

15. But, in order to your attaining this great and good End of Excommunication, Take heed of treating him before-hand with Austerity and Roughness, as if ye aim'd at his Ruin in Temporal or Spiritual Concerns, and not merely at *the Destruction of the Flesh, that his Soul may be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus*: (See the Note 1 Cor. v. 5.) Nor ought ye immediately to look upon him, as an implacable and utterly incorrigible Enemy to God and Godliness, and to Christ and the Gospel; but shou'd deal tenderly, as well as faithfully and plainly with him as a Brother, in setting the Evil of his Ways before him, and passing the awful Censure, if necessary, upon him, and in giving him seasonable Admonitions, as Opportunities offer, considering the Relation that he either bears, or has bore to you, in Hopes that, by the Blessing of God on such Attempts, he may be reclaimed, and restored to his former Place in the Church.

16 *Now the Lord of Peace himself give you Peace always, by all Means. The Lord be with you all.*

16. Now may the Lord Jesus himself, our only Peace-maker with God, and the Author, Purchaser and Giver of all Manner of Peace and Happiness, make you prosperous in all Grace and Holiness, and fill you with all Joy and Peace in believing, that ye may have Peace in your own Souls, and one with another; and may be a harmonious and flourishing Church, at all Times, and by all Manner of Means, that are suited, by divine Appointment, to promote it! And that the Means, used for this Purpose, may be effectual, We earnestly beg that this blessed Lord, who commands and loves Peace, and delights in the Prosperity of his Servants, would afford all and every one of you his special Presence, in a Way of Providence and Grace, to protect and guide, assist, comfort, and perfect all that concerns you, in whatsoever relates to you severally, and all together as a Church.

17 *The Salutation of Paul with mine own Hand, which is the Token in every Epistle: So I write.*

17. To conclude with the Salutation, which I *Paul* write with my own Hand, as a sure Mark to distinguish my Epistles from such, as may be forged under my Name; and, as pretended to come from me, may deceive and trouble the Church; (*Chap.* ii. 2.) Whenever any of my Letters are wrote by an *Amanuensis*, as dictated by me, I always at the Close add, in my own Hand-writing, the following Words, or to that Effect, (See the Note on *Rom.* xvi. 22.)

18. May

18 *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ* be *with you all. Amen.*

18. May the free Love and Favour of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, inclusive of all its special Manifestations, Fruits and Effects, continually abound to all and every one of you! In Testimony of the Sincerity of my Desire and pleasing Hopes hereof, I heartily say, *Amen.*

RECOLLECTIONS.

How earnestly ought we to pray for the Success of the glorious Gospel, and for the Preservation and Liberty of Christ's Servants, that their Preaching it may not be obstructed by the Violence of unbelieving, perverse and wicked Men! And what a Pleasure is it when they, to whom the Care of Churches is committed, have a Satisfaction in their own Minds, that the Lord will establish them in the Faith, Hope and Holiness of the Gospel, and will engage their Hearts to do his Commandments, as deliver'd to them in his Name! But, alas! How grievous is it to find, that any Church-Members are disorderly Walkers, lazy in their own proper Affairs, and mischievous Busy-bodies in other People's Matters, to the Scandal of the Christian-name! The Churches, to which Persons of these Characters belong, ought, in case they can't be reclaim'd, to withdraw from them, and pass such a Censure, as may be a Mark of Disgrace upon them, and then shun all unnecessary Familiarities of conversing with them, to make them ashamed of the Evil of their Doings, that are directly contrary to the Precepts and Example of the holy Apostles; and yet they should be treated, as far as the Nature of Things will bear, in a brotherly Way, to bring them to Repentance. How unreasonable is it that idle and disorderly Walkers should live upon the Charity of others! But how cheerfully and generously should the industrious and helpless Poor be relieved, according to their Wants! May all the Churches of Christ have Peace among themselves, and Prosperity of every kind, from the Lord Jesus, and salute one another with the sincerest Christian-Affection! May their Hearts be directed into the Love of God, and a patient Waiting, under their various Tribulations, for Christ's second Coming to put an End to them! And may his Grace be ever with them all! *Amen.*

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF THE *First* Epistle of the Apostle PAUL to *TIMOTHY*.

In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The Preface to the *First* Epistle to *TIMOTHY*.

TIMOTHY was an excellent Youth, whose Father was a *Greek*, and his Mother a pious *Jewess*, (Acts xvi. 1, 3) who had taken a religious and exemplary Care to educate him in the Knowledge of the Old-Testament-Scriptures from his Childhood up; (2 *Tim*. i. 5, and iii. 15) and, Providence casting him under the Ministry of the Apostle *Paul*, this young Man, thro' the attending Power of the Holy-Ghost, was converted to the Faith of Christ, as seems to be intimated *Chap*. i. 2; (See the Note there) and was so inriched with the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit, that the Apostle had a great Affection for him, and soon turned his Thoughts toward him for an Assistant in the Work of the Ministry: And that the *Jews*, to whom the Apostle first preached, might not have the least Exception against this his Associate, as the Son of a *Gentile* by the Father's Side, he ordered him to be circumcised, which he had not been in the Days of his Infancy, but now consented to be; and then took him for his Companion under the Character of an Evangelist, an Office next to that of the Apostleship, in planting and watering the Churches.

Though *Paul* had, doubtless, taken much Pains with this young Evangelist in private Conversation, to fit him for a due Discharge of his Office, Hints of which may be gathered from *Chap*. i. 3, and 2 Epist. i. 13, and iii. 10—14; yet to fix Things more upon his Mind, and give him an Opportunity of having Recourse to them afterwards, and of communicating them to others, as there might be Occasion, either at *Ephesus*, where 'tis most generally supposed *Timothy* then was, or wherever he might go to fulfil his itinerant Work; as also to leave divine Directions in Writing for the Use of the Church and its Ministers in all succeeding Ages, he sent him this excellent Pastoral Letter, which contains a great

Variety

Variety of important Sentiments for their Regulation; and is supposed by some to have been written about the Year of our Lord 55, and by others 58: And about 9 or 10 Years afterwards, as some think, he followed it with the *Second Epistle*, which still more immediately and chiefly related to *Timothy* himself, and to his own *personal* Ministry and Conduct.

The Time when, the Place from which, and the Person by whom, this Epistle was sent, are indeed variously conjectured by learned Enquirers into Antiquity, while they all agree in its divine Authority, and its being written by the Apostle *Paul*.

This sacred Writer, after his usual Declaration of his apostolic Character, and affectionate Salutation of *Timothy*, lays before him his Duty of guarding against those Judaizing Teachers at *Ephesus*, or elsewhere, that taught any thing contrary to the sound Doctrine, which he himself had delivered, according to the Trust that Christ had committed to him. (*Chap*. i.) And as they adhered to Synagogue-Worship, and set themselves in Opposition to the Legality of the Power of *Gentile*-Princes, and treated it with Contempt, as though they had no Right of Dominion over them, he enjoins the offering up of Prayers in all Places, without Distinction, for Kings, and all that were in Civil-Authority, and for Subjects of all Characters, whether they were *Jews* or *Heathens*; and then goes on to direct the Behaviour of Women, among whom it seems there were great Indecencies, or Extravagances of Dress, and an assuming Management in religious Assemblies. (*Chap*. ii.) Then he proceeds to a Description of the proper Qualifications of ordinary Bishops or Pastors, and of Deacons and their Wives, with Intimations of the Course *Timothy* ought to take, as to his own Deportment in the Church, with regard to such Persons, and the whole of his own Office, considering the vast Importance of that Doctrine, which he was to preach: (*Chap*. iii.) From thence he takes Occasion to add Fore-warnings of Seducers, that would arise and pervert many, and would issue in a grand Apostacy; ordering him to give such Notices of them, as might fortify the Church of Christ against them, and to exercise himself in such exemplary Godliness, and attend so intirely to his ministerial Work, and to the Improvement of his Gifts in preaching the true Doctrine of Christ, in such a serious, judicious, diligent, grave and faithful Manner, as might raise his Youth above Contempt, and, through divine Grace, might be rendered effectual to the final Salvation of his own and his Hearers Souls. (*Chap*. iv.) Thereupon he directs his Conduct towards all Persons, whether Men or Women, of every Age and Station in the Church: and solemnly charges him, as in the Presence of Christ, to acquit himself with the utmost Prudence, Caution and Impartiality toward them, in consistence with a due Care of his own infirm State of Health, and suitable to the Circumstances of the People he might have to do with. (*Chap*. v.) And he closes with Advice, relating to the Duties of Servants, and the perverse Tendency of any contrary Doctrine of corrupt and worldly-minded Men, who being Strangers to the Power of Godliness, and not contented with a moderate Share of the Conveniences of this Life, run themselves into Sin and Ruin, through their covetous Desires: And in Opposition to these, he charges *Timothy* to act up to the Dignity of his sacred Trust and Character, as in the Sight and Presence of God, and as he would answer it in the great Day of Christ; and remonstrates against an Abuse of the Riches of this World, and against the false Principles of Philosophy, that are subversive of the Faith of the Gospel; concluding all with a Benediction, like himself, saying, Grace be with thee. *Amen*. (*Chap*. vi.)

CHAP. I.

The Apostle asserts his Office as of Divine Authority; salutes Timothy; *and reminds him of the Charge he had given him at* Ephesus, 1—4. *Of his End therein, and of the Design of the* Mosaic *Law*, 5—11. *Of his own Conversion, and Call to the Apostleship*, 12—17. *And of* Timothy's *Obligation to maintain Faith and a good Conscience, which* Hymeneus *and* Philetus *had put away from them*, 18—20.

TEXT.

1 PAUL *an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the Commandment of God our Saviour, and the Lord Jesus Christ*, which is *our Hope*;

2 *Unto Timothy*, my *own Son in the Faith: Grace, Mercy*, and *Peace from God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. PAUL, who is an Apostle of Jesus the true Messiah, (κατ᾽ ἐπιταγὴν) according to the authoritative and gracious Appointment of God the Father, who is the original Contriver and Orderer of the whole Scheme of Salvation; and of Jesus Christ, who is the great Lord and Redeemer, the Author, Object and Ground of all our Hope toward God, in Opposition to any Dependence on the Works of the Law for Justification; and is the only Mediator, in and through whom, as revealed in us by his Spirit, according to the Gospel-discovery of him, we have good Hope of eternal Glory. (*Col.* i. 27.)

2. He, who thus asserts his apostolic Office, to bind what he is going to write upon the Consciences of all that are concerned in it, even I *Paul* send this Epistle to you, my dear *Timothy*, who are already fully convinced of my divine Authority, and whom I regard with all the Tenderness and Affection of a Father to his own genuine Son, as I was the Instrument of bringing you to, and establishing you in, the Faith of Christ *; and as you are a young Man, and a spiritual Child of my own Likeness, and have faithfully served with me, as a Son with a Father, in the Gospel. (*Phil.* ii. 20, 22.) May the divine Favour, in all its Freeness and Fulness, and the divine Compassion, in all the Variety of its merciful and tender Exercises, which you, as a Minister, more than private Christians, will need, in a special Manner, to support, relieve, encourage and comfort you under all the Temptations, Labours, Difficulties and Dangers of your Station; and to pity and pardon all your

* As the Apostle called *Timothy* his *own* genuine *Son in the Faith*; (γνησίῳ) and frequently stiled him *his Son Timothy*, (ver. 18. 2 *Tim.* i. 2. and 1 *Cor.* iv. 7) it seems probable that he had been the Instrument of his Conversion to the Faith of Christ, as the Messiah spoken of in the Old Testament Prophecy, though we have no particular Account of it in the short History of the Beginning of the Apostle's Acquaintance with him: For he commonly speaks of those under this tender Appellation, to whom he had been so, as of *Titus* and *Onesimus*, Tit. i. 4, and *Philem.* ver. 10; and speaks of himself, as a spiritual Father, and of those as his Children, whom he had begotten by the Gospel, 1 *Cor.* iv. 14, 15, 2 *Cor.* xii. 14, *Gal.* iv. 19, and 1 *Thess.* ii. 11. But I don't find that he ever used this Appellation with regard to any, that were not converted by his Ministry.

Failings! (See the Note on *Rom.* i. 7.) And may all the Blessings of Peace with God and in your own Soul, and between you and those among whom you may be cast, together with all Manner of Prosperity, abound richly toward you from God our Father, as the eternal Fountain of all Good, and from Christ Jesus our Lord, as the Purchaser, and more immediate Author and Conveyer of it through the Merit of his own Blood.

3 *As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other Doctrine,*

3. As I desired and exhorted you (παρεκάλεσα) to continue some Time after me at *Ephesus*, when I took my Leave of that famous City, and passed into *Macedonia*; (Acts xx. 1—4) I would now remind you of my Design therein, and give you further Instruction about it, which is, that you might, in the Name, and by the Authority of Christ communicated to you by me his Apostle, solemnly enjoin some well-known Judaizing Christians there, and in those Parts, that they never dare to broach any Doctrine different from, much less contrary to, and corrupting of, the Simplicity of that, which I have faithfully preached, under divine Inspiration, among them, and where-ever I have gone.

4 *Neither give heed to Fables, and endless Genealogies, which minister Questions, rather than godly edifying, which is in Faith;* so do.

4. And you are to charge them, that they never regard, or propagate any fabulous *Jewish* Traditions, that are groundless, and destructive of the Purity of the Gospel; nor attend to the frivolous Pretences of this and that particular Person to his Pedigree, in an uninterrupted Line from *Abraham*, or others of the Patriarchs *, which lead to useless, intricate and endless Controversies †, and have no good Tendency to spiritual Edification after a godly Sort, such as is approved of God, and has him for its Author; nor are at all useful for establishing the Doctrines of Faith in Christ, or bringing any to believe in him, or building them up on their most holy Faith, who have believed through Grace.

5 *Now the End of the Commandment is Charity, out of a pure Heart, and of a good Conscience, and of Faith unfeigned:*

5. Now the End, which is aimed at ‖, and you ought to pursue, in the Charge I order'd you to inforce upon Judaizing Christians, (*ver.* 3) in Opposition to their fabulous, fruitless and perplexing Disputes, (*ver.* 4) is to promote a Spirit of Love toward God, and Christ, and one another, as springing from a sanctified Heart, and a faithful, pure and

* These *Genealogies*, as Dr. *Lightfoot* observes, were not any of the Genealogies in Scripture; but their long intricate Pedigrees, that they stood upon to prove themselves *Jews, Levites, Priests*, and the like. And to this we may add the Genealogy and Pedigree of their Traditions, which they derived, by a long Line of Succession, through the Hands of many Doctors. (Vol. I. pag. 308.)

† *Rather than* is observed by Criticks to be often used, not in a comparative but *negative* Sense, as in *Luke* xviii. 14, *John* iii. 19, and xii. 43, and 2 *Tim.* iii. 4.

‖ *The End of the Commandment* is supposed by some to mean the End of *the Law*, and by others of *the Gospel*; but it rather seems to me to be most immediately meant of the *Charge* or *Commandment*, which the Apostle had directed *Timothy* (ver. 3) to give to them, who taught other Doctrine. Thus he says, I besought thee to abide at *Ephesus*, (ἵνα παραγγείλῃς) *that thou mightest charge* some, that they teach no other Doctrine, and here, answerable to the Word there used, 'tis (τὸ τέλος τῆς παραγγελίας) *the End of the Commandment*, or *Charge*, *is Charity*, &c.

Blood

quiet Conscience, that is purged from dead Works by the Blood of Christ; as also from a Principle of sincere Faith, without the least Hypocrisy. (ἀνυποκρίτου).

6 From which some having swerved, have turned aside unto vain Jangling;

6. From all which some, as appears by their Language and Behaviour under a Profession of Christianity, having missed the grand Mark, (ἀστοχήσαντες) and wandered from the main Scope, to which all Doctrines and Practices ought to be directed, have turned into a very different and directly contrary Course, in vainly talking of Things, that are altogether unprofitable, and serve only to stir up Animosities, Strife and doubtful Disputations, like their idle Fables and endless Genealogies; (*ver.* 4.)

7 Desiring to be Teachers of the Law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

7. They affecting to set up for Doctors and Interpreters of the *Jewish* Law, by their corrupt and uncertain Traditions, and to impose it upon the *Gentiles*; while, at the same Time, they, in reality, neither apprehend the true Scope and Design of that Law itself, nor the Things, which they confidently assert in their false Glosses upon it.

8 But we know that the Law is good, if a Man use it lawfully;

8. But those of us, who are enlighten'd in the Knowledge of the Gospel, and in the principal Tendency and Design of the whole *Jewish* Dispensation, are throughly convinced of its being a wise and holy Institution, as it was appointed of God for answering good Purposes, if a regular and proper Use be made of it, according to his Intention, for bringing us to Christ: (*Gal.* iii. 24.) Even the *ceremonial* Law is of great Use, if we consider it, as having a typical Reference to him, and the Gospel-State, in which it is fulfilled by him, and not as to be continued with a perpetual Obligation for observing its ritual Ordinances, as Judaizers vainly imagine and contend for: And as to the *moral* Law, it is in itself of an excellent Nature, as holy, just and good; and 'tis still of admirable Use to convince us of Sin, and of our need of a Saviour, and is as good and perfect, and of as immutable Obligation to be obey'd now, as ever, if it be duly considered and made use of, as a Rule of Life, and Standard of all Righteousness to be complied with, not for Justification to Life, as those false Teachers would persuade us, but upon evangelical Principles of Faith and Love, in a conscientious Discharge of every Duty, that is owing to God, our Neighbour and ourselves, that he may be glorified thereby.

9 Knowing this, that the Law is not made for a righteous Man, but for the Lawless and Disobedient, for the Ungodly and for Sinners, for Un-

9. And we are at the same Time fully satisfied, that the *moral* Law, as still continuing in Force, and made the Law of Christ's Kingdom under the Gospel-State, is not designed to condemn, nor does its damnatory Sentence lie against (οὐ κεῖται) a true Believer in Christ, who is justified through Faith in him, and who, from a Principle of Faith, has an impartial Respect to all its

Com-

holy and Profane, for Murderers of Fathers, and Murderers of Mothers, for Manslayers.

Commands *; but 'tis made with its Sanction, and stands in Force for the Condemnation of impenitent and unbelieving Transgressors, and of those that will not be subject to the Authority of God in it; such as are impious Wretches, that have not the Fear of God in their Hearts, and wilfully turn aside from his holy Commandments, and that worship false Gods, like the idolatrous *Gentiles*; and such as are destitute of all true Holiness, and are Contemners of God and Religion; and such as don't stick at the horrible Sin of Parricide, or of murdering their Parents, whether Fathers or Mothers; and would maliciously destroy the Life of any Man whatsoever;

10 *For Whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with Mankind, for Menstealers, for Liars, for perjured Persons, and if there be any other Thing that is contrary to sound Doctrine,*

10. It is also in Force for the Condemnation of such as are guilty of Fornication or Adultery, (πόρνοις) or of any unlawful Familiarity between Persons of a different Sex; and such as are chargeable with the unnatural and detestable Sin of Sodomy; such as venture to steal Men, that they may either use, or sell them for Slaves; such as addict themselves to Lies in common Conversation; such as perjure themselves in Courts of Judicature; and such as go into any other Sort of Wickedness, in Heart and Life, that is contrary to the pure and wholesome Doctrine of divine Revelation, besides these that have been specified: All such Persons are condemned by the righteous Law of God, which severely forbids every Kind of Iniquity.

11 *According to the glorious Gospel of the Blessed God, which was committed to my Trust.*

11. Their Crimes are equally contrary to, and condemned by, the holy Nature, Design and Obligation of the Gospel, which illustriously displays the glorious Perfections, Counsels and Operations of the ever blessed God, who has an infinite Satisfaction and Delight in and of himself, immutably without Beginning, Alteration, or End, and is the Fountain of all Happiness to others, by means of, and according to the Tenor of this most excellent Gospel, which is a *Doctrine according to Godliness*, (Chap. vi. 3) and is glorious in its whole Scheme of Salvation by Jesus Christ, and in its happy and holy Effects on them that believe; (*Rom.* i. 16) and which I have been entrusted with, by divine Revelation and

* *The Law is not made for a righteous Man* evidently relates to its not being made *to condemn him*; because it really is made for such an one, as well as others, to be the Rule of his Obedience, and to restrain him from transgressing it: But since there is no Man, that lives and sins not, the righteous Man, whom it is not made to condemn, is to be understood of one, that is righteous in the Eye of the Law through the Righteousness of Christ received by Faith. And that *the moral Law* is here intended, appears from the Nature of the Crimes specified, as subjecting Persons to Condemnation by it, which are manifestly such as were forbidden in the Law of the Ten Commandments, and may be reduced to one or other of its Precepts. (See Dr. *Whitby*'s Note.) And as the 9th and 10th Verses most obviously speak of *the same Law*, though in the 9th Verse 'tis put *with* the Article in the *Greek*, and in the 10th *without* it, here Mr. *Lock*'s Criticism on the Word *Law*, (νόμος) as having a different Meaning, when used with and without the Article, seems to fail, as it does in several other Places: Nor is it always attended to by that learned Gentleman himself, according to what we have observed in the Note on *Rom.* iii. 19.

Commission, as a precious and sacred Depositum, to be faithfully preserved, and dispensed wherever I come.

12 *And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the Ministry;*

12. And while I think of the high Honour of this important Trust, I can't but, from the very Bottom of my Soul, bless the Name of Jesus Christ, our only Saviour, Lord and King, and give Vent to the grateful glowing Sentiments of my Heart, in all Ascriptions of Praise to him, who has qualified, authorised and strengthened me, (ἐνδυναμώσαντι) for this eminent Service; insomuch that, having formed me for himself, he was pleased to make account of me, as a faithful Servant; and so called me to, and vested me in the Apostolic Office, to minister the Gospel of his Grace.

13 *Who was before a Blasphemer, and a Persecutor, and injurious. But I obtained Mercy, because I did it ignorantly, in Unbelief:*

13. Even me, the unlikeliest and unworthiest of all others, considering that, till his Grace reach'd and turn'd my Heart, I was a furious Blasphemer of his divine Person, and sacred Doctrine; and an outragious Persecutor of his Members, even unto Imprisonment and Death; and a most injurious Reviler (ὑβριστής) of his Name, People and Interest. (*Acts* ix. 1, 2, and *Luke* xxiii. 34.) But, notwithstanding all these complicated, incensing Provocations, I, O sweetly-amazing Thought! found forgiving Mercy, there being just Room left for it, according to the extensive Declarations of pardoning Grace, and Christ's Prayer for ignorant Offenders; (*Matth* xii. 31. and *Luke* xxiii. 34.) * because I did all this, not under a Conviction of his being the true Messiah, and with desperate malicious Enmity to him, as such, in Defiance of that Conviction: No, on the other hand, *I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many Things contrary to the Name of Jesus*; (Acts xxvi. 9.) and so all was the Effect of blind, tho' very unreasonable and criminal Prejudices against him, and of rash, mad and misguided Zeal, under the Power of Unbelief.

14 *And the Grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, with Faith and Love which is in Christ Jesus.*

14. And the free Favour of our gracious and compassionate Lord was so amazingly great to such an obstinate, self-deluding Wretch as I was, that (ὑπερεπλεόνασε) it superabounded toward me, far beyond what is usual, or could be expected, or can be fully estimated, or conceived of, in working effectual Faith in my Heart, who was before so perverse and resolute an Unbeliever; and in producing a cordial affectionate Love in my Soul to himself, and Delight in

* 'Tis not to be supposed that the Apostle, by saying *because I did it ignorantly and in Unbelief*, meant that his Ignorance and Unbelief were deserving, or were a proper Cause of his obtaining Mercy: For it would be strange indeed to imagine, that there were any Merit in an Ignorance, which was owing to a wilful Rejection of the clearest Means of Knowledge; and in Unbelief, which is itself a heinous Sin, with an Entail of Damnation upon it, under the Light of the Gospel; accordingly the Apostle in the next Words speaks with high Admiration of the *Grace of the Lord Jesus*, as *exceeding abundant towards him*, who consider'd himself, as *the Chief of Sinners*: But his Ignorance and Unbelief did not shut him out of the Sphere of Mercy, as it left him a capable Subject of it, according to the Grace of the Gospel; whereas, had his Blasphemy and Persecutions been maliciously practised, contrary to his Knowledge and Belief of Christ's being the true Messiah, they would have amounted to the unpardonable Sin.

him, as the anointed Saviour, and in his People and Cause, tho' I was before so violent and injurious an Enemy to, and Persecutor of him and them.

15 This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the World to save Sinners; of whom I am Chief.

15. What adds greatly to the Pleasure of my Reflections on this exceeding abundant Grace toward myself is, that here is a wide Door open'd for the very worst of Sinners; in Love to whose Souls, I now as passionately long for their Happiness, as I before opposed it: I can now assure them from my own good Experience, as well as from the whole Tenor of the Gospel-Revelation, that its grand summary Article may be firmly depended upon, as divinely true and faithful, and is every Way worthy to be universally, believingly and affectionately embraced by all, whether greater or lesser Sinners that hear it, as it consists in this joyful, nearly concerning, and best of all other Declarations, *viz.* That the great End and Design of Christ's assuming Human-Nature in his Incarnation, and coming into this lower World, under the Character of a Saviour, to fulfil the Law, suffer and die in the Room and Stead of Sinners, was, that he might deliver them from Sin and Wrath thro' Faith in him, whether they be idolatrous *Gentiles*, or blind, prejudiced, and persecuting *Jews*, like what I myself was; and might bring them to that Salvation, which is in him with eternal Glory: A greater Proof, and more encouraging Instance of which, can scarce be imagined, than has appeared in me, who have been indeed the most notorious, first-rate Sinner, exceeding all others in my malignant Blasphemy of Christ, and Persecution of his Members.

16 Howbeit, for this Cause I obtained Mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all Long-suffering, for a Pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to Life everlasting.

16. But, (αλλα) still further to encourage all Sorts of Sinners to believe in Christ for the Remission of Sins, how great or many soever they have been, I must add, that this astonishing Instance of free, sovereign and abounding Grace toward me was design'd, not merely for the Salvation of my own Soul: But infinite Wisdom order'd it likewise with a View to the Salvation of others, to whom I am appointed to preach these glad Tidings, that in me first of all, † and as the Chief of Sinners, the gracious and compassionate Saviour might exercise all Forbearance and Patience, while I was, for a long while, amidst the Light of the Gospel, going on in the High Road of Rebellion against him; and that he might set me forth, as the most remarkable Sample of what rich Grace they may warrantably hope to find in him, who, after all their Opposition to him, shall be brought, under an affecting humbling Sense of their Guilt and Danger, (as I was) to put their Trust alone in him for the Pardon of Sin, Acceptance with God, and safe Conduct to Eternal Life.

† Here seems to be a direct Reference back to what the Apostle said of himself *ver.* 15, *of whom I am Chief*, (ων πρωτος ειμι εγω) and here he says *in me first*, or *the Chief*. (εν εμοι πρωτω.)

17 *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God,* be *Honour and Glory, for ever and ever. Amen.*

17. Now, in Reflection on the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *, to whom I have made my religious grateful Acknowledgments for having put me into the Ministry, (*ver.* 12) I solemnly ascribe all Honour and Glory to him, as the sovereign Lord and Governor of the whole Creation, who is from Everlasting to Everlasting the incorruptible God; invisible, as to his divine Nature; the only Being, inclusive of the Father and Spirit, that is possessed of infinitely perfect Wisdom, originally and essentially in himself, and is the Giver of all Wisdom to others, and makes them wise unto Salvation, that believe in him: May he be magnified and adored in the loftiest Strains, from henceforth through all succeeding Time, and to an endless Eternity! *Amen.* So let it be, so it ought to be, and so it will be among those that know and love him.

18 *This Charge I commit unto thee, Son Timothy, according to the Prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good Warfare,*

18. The Charge, by which I have ordered you, my dear Son *Timothy*, to remonstrate with all Authority against those that would teach any other Doctrine, than you have received, † (*ver.* 3, 4, 5.) and which I commit, as a sacred Trust to you, from whom there are justly great Expectations of eminent Service, according to the Intimations, which the Holy-Ghost had given by some New Testament-Prophets, before you entered on your Office, as a Person mark'd out for it, and to be remarkably endow'd with superior extraordinary Gifts, and miraculous Powers, for fulfilling it; which I now remind you of, that, in Reflection upon these Things, you may be the more excited to act the Part of a faithful, diligent and courageous Soldier of Jesus Christ, in fighting his Battles, under him, against Sin,

* As *Christ Jesus our Lord*, I apprehend, is the only Subject spoken of, and all along mentioned in the five preceding Verses, the Connection carries this lofty Ascription of Glory most immediately to him, considered as *God*; and as the Apostle (*ver.* 1. 11, 12.) had equally joined God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, as giving him his Divine and Apostolic Commission, and had equally wished Grace, Mercy and Peace to *Timothy* from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, (*ver.* 2.) and as he (*ver.* 12.) went into the most religious Thanksgivings to Christ for putting him into the Ministry; It seems most natural to understand him, as closing the Account of what Christ had therein done for him, with a Doxology to him; and if. as some suppose, *the King eternal* signifies *the King of Ages*, (βασιλει των αιωνων) meaning the Patriarchal, Mosaic and Evangelical Ages, With what great Propriety may Christ be considered, as that King, who often appeared as the great Jehovah, that ordered and governed the two former, as well as chiefly acts, as King of the Church, in the last of these Dispensations? Nor is it any just Objection to this Doxology's being offered to Christ, that the like, as some think, is presented to God the Father, *Chap.* vi. 15, 16; (See the Note there) since the divine Titles, and essential Characters of Godhead are frequently ascribed to the Father and the Son, to show that they, in Nature and Divine Properties, are one God, in Distinction from all other pretended Deities, though in other Places they are *Personally* distinguished from each other: Nor is it any greater Objection, (as I humbly apprehend) against applying that Part of this Description of God to our Lord Jesus Christ, in which he is said to be *invisible*; since this relates, not to his human Nature and Office-appearances under the Old and New Testament Dispensations; but to his *Divine Nature*, considered under the formal Notion of him, as *God*. However, in this View of him, the Father is no more excluded from this Doxology, than the Son is, were we to understand it, as an Ascription of Glory to God the Father: But admitting that this was directed to Christ, 'tis as lofty an Ascription of Glory and Honour to him, as is any where made to the Father himself.

† Several Expositors have thought that this Verse is to be connected with *ver.* 5; and that all the others, which come between, are to be consider'd as a *Parenthesis*.

Satan

Satan and the World, and in standing up valiantly for the Truth against all Opposition.

19 Holding Faith and a good Conscience; which some having put away, concerning Faith have made Shipwreck:

19. In which, as ever you would acquit yourself with Honour and Advantage, and as becomes your Character and Function, it concerns you to be stedfast in the Faith of the Gospel, to hold it fast, and to hold it forth in your Ministry; and to keep a *Conscience void of Offence toward God and Man,* (Acts xxiv. 16.) that you may be upright and faithful in preaching it, and living answerable to it, which some Professors of Christ's Name, having rejected * and paid no Regard to, have thereupon (as is always to be expected in such Cases) renounced the Doctrine of Faith itself, which they before profess'd, to their own Danger, Loss and Damage, like one that suffers to the greatest Extremity by a Shipwreck.

20 Of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

20. Of this Sort of Apostates there are two remarkably infamous Ringleaders, whom I think myself obliged to point out, that you and all Christians may beware of them, and bear a public Testimony against them; they are *Hymeneus* and *Alexander*, † who were so notorious for subverting the Faith and Holiness of the Gospel, and for broaching their horrible Errors, and practising abominable Immoralities, that I was under a Necessity of exercising the Apostolic Rod, which Christ has given me, by delivering them up to the Power of Satan to inflict Punishments upon them in Body, or Soul, or both, that, by Means of so severe a Discipline, they might be brought to a Conviction of the Evil of their Hearts and Lives; and, by feeling the dreadful Consequence of their Crimes, might be afraid of persisting in their blasphemous Defamations of the Name, Doctrines and Ways of the Lord. (See the Notes on 1 *Cor.* iv. 21. and 2 *Cor.* x. 6.)

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* *Some having put away* (ἀπωσάμενοι) *Faith and a good Conscience,* can by no Means prove, that they ever had them before, as some contend: For the Word here used properly signifies to *reject,* or *repel,* as in *Acts* vii. 27, where 'tis said, that *he that did his Neighbour wrong thrust Moses away* (ἀπώσατο) *saying, Who made thee a Ruler and Judge over us?* And at other Times 'tis used to signify only a rejecting of what was proposed to Persons for their Acceptance; as when the *Israelites would not obey Moses, but thrust him from* them; (ἀπώσαντο) *Acts* vii. 39, and when the Apostle, speaking of the Gospel, said to the *Jews, Seeing ye put it from you,* (ἀπωθεῖσθε) *Lo, we turn to the Gentiles.*

† *Hymeneus* was, in all Likelihood, the same that is spoken of, 2 *Tim.* ii. 17, 18, as a pernicious Man, who denied the Doctrine *of the Resurrection, and overthrew the Faith of some*: And *Alexander* seems to have been *the Coppersmith,* mention'd, 2 *Tim.* iv. 14, 15. *as having done the Apostle much Evil, and greatly withstood his Words*; and was probably that *Alexander,* whom the *Jews* stirred up to declaim against *Paul,* and fix an Odium upon him, in the Uproar at *Ephesus.* (See the Paraphrase and Notes on *Acts* xix. 33.)

Recollections.

How solemn and important, honourable and delightful, is the Trust, that God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ have committed to Gospel-Ministers! How thankful should they be for it; and desirous of abundance of Grace and Mercy from these divine Persons to help, pity and prosper them, that they may be supported under their numerous Trials from without, and from within, and enabled to be faithful in their Lord's Work, according to the Qualifications he has given them, and all reasonable Expectations from them! They may indeed meet with many virulent and subtle Adversaries; some furious Persecutors, like *Paul* before his Conversion; others Apostates, like *Hymeneus* and *Alexander*; and others, that would introduce fabulous Traditions, strange Doctrines, doubtful Disputations and vain Janglings, to the Overthrowing of the Faith of many nominal Professors, instead of promoting spiritual Edification: But as all such are to be shunn'd and rejected, while real Converts are to be affectionately loved, as genuine Children in the Faith; With what Courage may the Servants of Christ stand to their Charge, in which they are called to war a good Warfare! And with what Pleasure may they recommend the glorious Gospel of the Blessed God, in Hope that the like Grace may be extended to other Sinners, for working Faith and Love in them, by means of their preaching it, as has been shown to themselves! For they well know, and can assure all about them, on the Credit of a divine Testimony, that Jesus Christ came into the World to save the Chief of Sinners. O wondrous superabounding Grace! It turns the Hearts, and pardons the Sins of Blasphemers, Persecutors and injurious Persons, and frees them from the Condemnation of the Law, which don't stand in Force against those, that are made righteous through Faith in Christ, but only against obstinate, impenitent and unbelieving Sinners, that persist in Ungodliness and Immoralities of various Kinds, which are forbidden by the good and holy Law of God, and are equally contrary to the sound Doctrine of the Gospel. But how should Sinners tremble at the Thought of continuing to oppose, and reject the Gospel, and making a wrong Use of the Law! And how solicitous should Preachers and Hearers be, that they may live under the Power of Evangelical Love, as proceeding from a sanctified Heart; and that unfeigned Faith and a good Conscience may be always preserved together; lest, by violating Conscience, they soon make Shipwreck of Faith! And with what Gratitude and Praise should all, that are experimentally acquainted with Christ, according to the Gospel-Revelation of him, unite their Adorations of him, together with the Father and Spirit, as he in his divine Nature is, inseparably from them, the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God! To whom be Honour and Glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

CHAP. II.

The Apostle orders Prayers to be made, every where, for all Sorts of Persons, Heathens and their Magistrates, as well as others, since the Grace of the Gospel makes no Difference of Ranks or Nations, 1—8. *And shows how Women ought to behave in civil and religious Life,* 9—15.

TEXT.

1 I *Exhort therefore, that first of all, Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions,* and *giving of Thanks be made for all Men;*

PARAPHRASE.

1. AS the Prejudices of the Judaizing Christians are so strong against the *Gentiles*, and some among them reject the Authority of Heathen-Magistrates, I therefore, suitable to my Character, as the Apostle of the *Gentiles*, do in the first Place exhort, that in every Christian-Assembly, and in family and secret Worship, all Manner of Addresses, in a Way of Deprecation of Evils, and of Petitions and

Pleas for all needful Mercies, and in a Way of Thanksgiving and Praise for Mercies received, be offered up to God, through Christ, for Men of all Sorts, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, and of all Ranks and Degrees, whether in higher or lower Stations.

2 *For Kings, and for all that are in Authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable Life in all Godliness and Honesty.*

2. That they be made for Civil Magistrates, though Heathens; such as bear the Title of Emperors or Kings, or as are in high Places of Dignity and Authority under them, or under any Form of Government whatsoever, that their Persons and Administrations may be blessed, and they may rule in the Fear of God, as *Israel* were to pray for Heathen-Kings, and the Peace of the Cities, where they were carried captive: (*Ezra* vi. 10, and *Jer.* xxix. 7.) And I, as an Apostle of a still more benevolent and extensively gracious Dispensation, now exhort that Prayers be likewise offered for all Sorts of Subjects, that we, who are such, may, under the Protection of the Civil Government, and according to God's Design in appointing it for the Good of the Community, live, and pass our Time, and transact our Affairs, (διαγωμεν) with Safety and Peace, secure from all Outrages and Violence, public or private, to ourselves and Families, or to our civil and religious Rights and Privileges; and with a Tranquillity, that may be subservient to, and exemplified in, all Acts of Piety toward God, and of moral Honesty, Virtue, and honourable Conversation toward Men of every Character.

3 *For this is good and acceptable in the Sight of God our Saviour:*

3. For thus to pray, and thus to live, is in itself fit and right, and every Way becoming Christians; and, as such, is agreeable to the good and holy Nature and Will of God, and well-pleasing in his Sight through Christ, who has made himself known under the endearing Character of God your Saviour and mine, together with all that believe, of what Rank or Nation soever; there being now no Difference, as to this, in his Account.

4 *Who will have all Men to be saved, and to come unto the Knowledge of the Truth.*

4. Who according to the good Pleasure of his Will, (*Ephes.* i. 5, 9) for the more illustrious Display of the Freeness, Sovereignty, Variety, and abundant Riches of his Grace under the Gospel-dispensation, intends effectually to save all Sorts of Men, whether Kings or Subjects, high or low, greater or lesser Sinners, *Jews* or *Gentiles* *; and, in

* *All Men* here, and *all* in Verse 6, cannot, without the greatest Inattention to the whole Scope of the Context, be made to signify all and *every Individual* of Mankind, and so construed into a Proof of *universal Redemption* and *Salvation*: For as these and such like universal Terms are often used in a restrained and distributive Sense; (See the Note on 2 *Cor.* v. 17) so all along in the preceding Verses, which speak of *praying for all Men, for Kings,* &c. and which these Verses refer to, as Arguments to inforce it against the Prejudices of the *Jews*, who despised the *Gentiles*, and their Rulers, it is plain that by *all Men* is meant *all Sorts of Men*, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, *Kings* or *Subjects*. To suppose it to signify every Individual of Mankind, can scarce be reconciled with the Apostle *John*'s saying, (1 *John* v. 16) *There is a Sin unto Death, I don't say that ye shall pray for it*, that is, for those who evidently appear to have been guilty of the unpardonable Sin; much less are *Thanks* to be offered for such

in order hereunto, determines that the Gospel shall be published to every Creature, (*Mark* xvi. 15, see the Note there) that Sinners of every Nation may be brought to a saving Acquaintance with its important Truths, relating to the Way of Pardon and eternal Life, through Jesus Christ, in whom alone there is Salvation for them. (*Acts* iv. 12.)

5 *For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus;*

5. For though he was formerly, in a peculiar and restrained Sense, the God of the *Jews*, there is now, according to antient Prophecies, (*Zech.* xiv. 9) one and the same God to them, and to the *Gentiles* also, *seeing 'tis one God which shall justify the Circumcision by Faith, and the Uncircumcision through Faith:* (Rom. iii. 29, 30.) And though the *Gentiles* have set up many Mediators to pacify, and intercede with their superior Gods; and though *Moses* and the High Priests under the Law were a Sort of Mediators between God and the People of *Israel*, and them only †; yet there is now one and the same, and only one Mediator of Reconciliation and Intercession between God, and Men of all Nations, who were at Variance with him by reason of Sin; even the great and glorious, yea, divine Man, Jesus Christ, who assumed human Nature into personal Union with himself, as the Son of God; and so was truly Man, as well as God, and thereby completely fitted for, and accordingly performed the Office of an interposing Saviour between both the offended and offending Parties, God and Man; the Nature and Interest of both being united in him: 'Tis therefore highly proper, that Prayers and Praises should be offered up to God for all Sorts of Men through him, *in whom all Nations shall be blessed.*

6 *Who gave himself a Ransom for all,*

6. Who being Lord of his own Life, (*John* x. 18) and having an infinite Dignity in his Person as God-Man,

such, and all the Wicked of the Earth. But the *all Men*, whom God will have to *be saved*, are those only, whom he will have to be *brought to the Knowledge of the Truth*, which cannot be said of all Mankind, universally without Exception; since a great Part of the World neither are, nor ever were enlighten'd with the Knowledge of the Gospel itself. But a great Number of both *Jews* and *Gentiles* of various Nations, and some of all Ranks and Orders of People have been, not only favoured with the Gospel, but also savingly taught to know the Truth, as it is in Jesus: And of *this All* 'tis said, Christ *gave himself a Ransom for them*, ver. 6, as the procuring Cause of their being brought to the *Knowledge of the Truth*, and eternally saved by that Means, according to the Will of God: And to suppose that God really *willed* the Illumination and Salvation, which he never *effected*, and *the Means* of which he never granted, is to defeat *the Counsel of his Will, who works all Things according to it*, (Ephes. i. 11) in Ways that are suitable to the different Make of his Creatures in the moral, as well as in the natural World, without any Force upon the free and rational Faculties of Mankind; and he hath said, with respect to the Government of their Affairs, *My Counsel shall stand, and I will do all my Pleasure.* (Isa. xlvi. 10.)

† Christ's being stiled *Man*, when spoken of, as Mediator between God and Men, is no more an Argument against his being also *God*, in the Discharge of that Office, than its being at other Times said, that *the Lord of Glory was crucified*, and *God purchased the Church with his own Blood*, (1 Cor. ii. 8, and Acts ii. 28) is an Argument against his being *Man*, in his Sufferings and Bloodshed; and as he is expresly called *the One Mediator*, this must exclude all others, such as Saints and Angels, which the Papists set up, and idolatrously worship, as their Mediators, in like manner as the *Gentiles* had formerly set up many Mediators, to pacify, and intercede with their superior Gods. (See Mr. *Joseph Mede*'s Works, pag. 772, &c.)

freely

to be testified in due Time.

freely offered up himself, Soul and Body, an atoning Sacrifice to God, and laid down his Life, as a Price of Redemption, (ἀντίλυτρον) or as a Ransom paid to divine Justice, by his suffering in the Room and Stead of many, (*Mat.* xx. 28) to deliver them from the Bondage of Sin, Satan, the Law and Death, (See the Note on *ver.* 4.) even vast Multitudes, which no Man can number, of all Nations, Ranks and Degrees, whom he *redeemed from among Men*; (Rev. v. 9, and vii. 9) a Testimony to which was given by the former Prophets in their Days, (1 *Pet.* i. 10, 11) and was to be still more clearly given, as it now is, under the New Testament-Dispensation, by preaching the Gospel in its proper Season, first to the *Jews*, and afterwards to the *Gentiles*. (Rom. i. 16.)

7 *Whereunto I am ordained a Preacher, and an Apostle (I speak the Truth in Christ, and lie not) a Teacher of the Gentiles in Faith and Verity.*

7. Unto the publishing of which Gospel, I am appointed, and authorized of God, to be, as it were, a Herald, (κῆρυξ) and an Apostle, with an extensive Commission to proclaim it, without Restriction to the *Jews*; (whatsoever those of the Circumcision may think, I solemnly declare, and appeal to Christ, as a Believer in him, and as in his omniscient Presence, who is Witness to what I say, that I herein speak, with the strictest Veracity, without the least Prevarication) I am in a special Manner ordained of God to be a Preacher, particularly to the *Gentiles*, of the Faith and Truth, or true Faith of the Gospel, that his Will, for saving Purposes, may be made known to them by me, with all Faithfulness and Sincerity.

8 *I will therefore that Men pray every where, lifting up holy Hands, without Wrath and Doubting.*

8. I therefore, according to this divine Commission toward the *Gentiles*, insist upon it, as in the Name of my great Lord and Master, that Christians, and particularly Men, that are the Peoples Mouth to God, pray for all the forementioned Sorts of Persons, not with a Confinement to the Temple, and *Jewish* Synagogues, but in every Place, as there may be Opportunity and Convenience for it; one being no more holy now, than another: (*John* iv. 21—24) And this ought to be done with Fervor, Purity and Elevation of Heart to God, in Token of which Holy Men have used to lift up their Hands in their sacred Devotions, without a wrathful Temper, like that which discovers itself in the Malice and Indignation of the *Jews* against the *Gentiles*; and without doubting whether God will hear the Prayer of Faith, or whether he will be gracious in saving *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, that believe in Christ; and without reasoning and disputing against it. (διαλογισμου.)

9 *In like Manner also, that Women adorn themselves in modest Apparel, with Shamefacedness and*

9. I also alike insist upon it, that Women appear, as at all Times, so especially at religious Assemblies, neat and decent in a Garb suitable to the Modesty of their Sex, (μετα αιδους και σωφροσυνης) with an Air of Reverence of God and of sacred Things, and in a prudent, sober Manner; not adorning

Sobriety; not with broidered Hair, or Gold, or Pearls, or costly Aray;

adorning themselves * with curiously curled and plaited Hair, after the Manner of lewd Women, or with gay and showy Deckings of Gold and precious Stones, or any rich and gaudy Apparel, (1 *Pet.* iii. 3) which, when they are fond of them, and excessive in them beyond their Circumstances, discover Pride and Vanity of Heart, and a greater Solicitude of appearing before Men, than before God.

10 *But (which becometh Women professing Godliness) with good Works.*

10. But (as is most decent and honourable for religious Women, that make a Profession of Piety, and of a supreme Regard to the Things of another World) their chief Concern should be to put on the shining Ornaments of such Graces, Practices and Performances, as are good in themselves, conformable to the holy Law of God, and of great Price in his Sight, and useful to others.

11 *Let the Women learn in Silence, with all Subjection.*

11. According to the becoming Modesty, with which Women ought to behave in Church-Assemblies, Let them listen to public Ministrations, with Meekness and Silence, and in due Subjection to the superior Characters of their Husbands, and the Ministers, of whom they are to learn the Things of God.

12 *But I suffer not a Woman to teach, nor to usurp Authority over the Man, but to be in Silence.*

12. But I by no Means permit †, that the Woman should take upon her publickly to preach in the Church; (See the Notes on 1 *Cor.* xi. 3, and xiv. 34) nor do I allow that, under any Pretence whatsoever, she assume an Authority to herself, that betokens a Superiority to the Man: But I insist upon it, that, in all religious Assemblies, she, suitable to the Order of her Sex, behave with a meek and silent Subjection to him; and the Reason of this is founded in the original Law of Nature, and in the State of Things immediately after the Fall.

13 *For Adam was first formed, then Eve.*

13. For *Adam*, the common Father of all Mankind, was brought into Being by the great Creator before his Wife *Eve*, who was made out of one of his Ribs, (*Gen.* ii. 21)

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* The *Adornings* condemned here, and 1 *Pet.* iii. 4, are such, as were over-curious and extravagant, rich and costly above the Rank, Station and Ability of those that wore them, and as tended to puff up the Pride, Levity and Vanity of their own Hearts, and to entice others to Wantonness, by those Ways of decking themselves; and they seem to be such Adornings, as were chiefly, if not intirely, used as the Attire of Harlots. (See Dr. *Whitby*'s Note here, and on 1 *Pet.* iii. 4.) But that some Adornings are lawful on proper Occasions, according to Peoples different Stations, is evident from their having been worn by *Rebecca* and Queen *Esther*, Gen. xxiv. 22, 30, and *Esth.* v. 1, and from the Allusions, that are made to them, with Approbation, in setting forth the Beauty and Glory of the Church. *Psal.* xlv. 9, 13, *Isa.* lxi. 10, and *Ezek.* xvi. 10—14, 16. The Caution therefore against these Sorts of Adornings, either relates to those that were some way excessive, fantastical, luxurious or indecent; or else to an *Affectation* of outward Dress, rather than the brighter Ornaments of Virtue, Modesty and Chastity, Piety, Holiness and good Works, (*Chap*, v. 10,) as those Forms of Expression are sometimes to be understood, not in an absolutely negative, but *comparative* Sense. (See *Exod.* xvi. 8, *Joel* ii. 13, and *Luke* xiv. 12, 13)

† The *teaching* here forbid to the Woman relates to *public Preaching*; but don't exclude her from engaging in private Family-Instruction of Children, or others, either by herself or with her Husband, as *Timothy*'s Mother and Grandmother most probably taught him the Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, 2 *Tim.* iii. 15; and as *Priscilla* joined with *Aquila* in privately expounding the Way of God to *Apollos*, Acts xviii. 26.

which

which intimates, that *the Man was not created for the Woman, but the Woman for the Man,* (1 Cor. xi. 9) and that, by Consequence, she ought to be in proper Subjection to him.

14 *And Adam was not deceived, but the Woman being deceived was in the Transgression.*

14. And as to the Ruin that is brought upon Mankind by the Fall, It was not *Adam* that was deceived, and drawn into Sin, by the immediate Stratagem of the Serpent; but *Eve,* his Wife, being imposed upon by that subtle Adversary, was the first of them that went into the Transgression of the Law of God, which forbade their eating the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil upon pain of Death; and she was the Means of her Husband's doing the same, (*Gen.* iii. 1—6, 12, 13) without his own being seduced by the Serpent himself, and (which indeed aggravated his Sin) without any Deception, but knowingly, as induced to it by his fond Affection to his Wife.

15 *Notwithstanding, she shall be saved in Child-bearing, if they continue in Faith and Charity, and Holiness with Sobriety.*

15. However, the Female Sex * shall be so far relieved against the righteous Sentence upon the first Woman, (*Gen.* iii. 16) that they shall be carried through the Sorrows of Child-bearing, sometimes with Safety, and always with Freedom from them, as a Curse; and shall certainly be saved with an everlasting Salvation, in case they prove themselves to be real Christians, by continuing in the Exercise of Faith and Trust in God through Christ, the promised Seed; and, as the Fruit of their Faith, in Love to God and his People; and in all conjugal Chastity and Holiness of Heart and Life, together with a due Moderation of their Passions and Appetites, and a sober Behaviour, as becomes Women professing Godliness, which *has the Promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come.* (Chap. iv. 8.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

How abundantly more extensive is the Grace of God under the Gospel-dispensation, than it was in the *Jewish* Ages! He intends the Salvation of all Sorts of Persons, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles,* high or low, greater or lesser Sinners; and accordingly will bring in Multitudes of them to the saving Knowledge of Christ, who is the only Mediator between the offended God and offending Men, and freely gave himself up to Death, as a Price of Redemption to satisfy divine Justice for all of every Character, that shall believe in him, and to deliver them from Sin, and from the Wrath to come. What a blessed and encouraging Ground of Hope, and of Prayer, is here, for Kings and Subjects, that by means of a Gospel-ministry, which Christ has appointed to testify his atoning Death, they may be brought to know and believe in him, though at present they be Strangers and Enemies to him! And how pleasing to God is it, that Christian-Subjects, on all Occasions, and whenever they are engaged in divine Worship, without Regard to any Distinction of Places, be importunate in

* *She shall be saved* can't relate personally to *Eve,* who was dead long before, whereas this is a Promise for Time to come: And therefore I take it to relate to *Women in general,* that were involved with her in the Sentence pronounced, *Gen.* iii. 16; and so *she* is a Noun of Multitude, including the whole Sex; accordingly, by an Analogy of Number, frequent in such Cases, 'tis expressed, in the latter Part of this Verse, by *their* continuing in Faith, &c. (See Dr. *Whitby*'s Note.)

Prayer, and hearty in Thanksgivings for their political Governors, as they are ordained of God for the Good of the Community, that, under their Protection and Favour, they may live in quiet Possession of their religious and civil Rights, and have full Liberty for the Discharge of all Moral and Christian-Duties! Women, as well as Men, are to join in public Worship, and to behave with Decency, like Persons professing Godliness: They ought not to be fond of decking themselves with splendid Attire, nor set their Hearts upon fine and sumptuous Dress, but upon the richer and brighter Ornaments of Virtue and Grace, and Aboundings in every good Work: And remembring the Rank, in which God has placed their Sex by the Law of Creation, and after the Fall, in which the Woman was first in the Transgression, they should take heed of every thing, that looks like an Affectation of Superiority to the Man, and be silent Learners with due Subjection, and not Preachers in the Church: And as ever they would be comforted under the dismal Effects of the Fall, and be carried safe through the Sorrows and Dangers of Child-bearing, and get at last to Heaven, it behoves them to live in an Exercise of Faith and Love, Chastity, Holiness and Sobriety: For, blessed be God! Here is a gracious Promise of rich Mercy to such.

CHAP. III.

The Apostle describes what ought to be the Qualifications and Behaviour of Gospel-Bishops, 1—7. *And of Deacons and their Wives,* 8—13. *And gives* Timothy *a Reason of his writing so particularly to him about these, and other Church-Affairs, for directing his own Conduct, as an Evangelist,* 14—16.

TEXT.

1 THIS *is a true Saying, If a Man desire the Office of a Bishop, he desireth a good Work.*

2 *A Bishop then must be blameless, the Husband of one Wife, vigilant, sober, of good*

PARAPHRASE.

1. TO proceed to some other Directions, that may be needful for you, my Son *Timothy*, to be acquainted with, in order to a due Discharge of your Trust, as an Evangelist; It is certainly true, and may well be said, that if any Christian, properly qualified, is inclined, with a View to the Glory of God and the Good of Souls, to enter upon the Office of a Pastor, or Overseer of God's Flock, to perform the Part of a Bishop in the Oversight of it, (See the Notes on *Acts* xx. 28, and 1 *Pet.* v. 2) he aims at a very important, honourable and useful, though laborious Post and Service: (καλȣ ἐργȣ) But that you and such may know, and the Church may judge, and not be imposed upon, It is proper to draw out some Account of what Sort of Qualifications are needful for a faithful and acceptable Discharge of the Duties of such a high and laborious Station.

2. A Bishop, or Pastor then, ought to be an inoffensive Man, of an unexceptionable moral Character, in every Relation of Life, *that the Ministry be not blamed*; (2 Cor. vi. 3) and, if he be not a single Man*, he ought by no Means

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* *The Husband of one Wife,* neither means that a Bishop or Pastor is obliged to marry, nor that he ought never to marry a second Wife, the Prohibition of which would be contrary to natural Rights, and the Design of the Law of Marriage itself; neither of which was ever intended to be set aside by the

Behaviour, given to Hospitality, apt to teach;

Means to have any more than one Wife at a Time; no, nor on any Account, except in case of Adultery, to divorce his Wife, and marry another, while she is living: (*Mat.* xxxi. 32.) He ought also to be very circumspect and diligent in his Work, watchful against Satan and all his Instruments, and watchful over his own Spirit, Words and Actions, and for the Souls of those, that are committed to his Charge; and to be very moderate in his Appetites, Passions and Pleasures; to be affable, courteous, prudent and engaging in the general Course of his Conversation towards all Men; and to be of a generous Soul, ready, according to his Ability, to relieve the Necessities of the Poor †, and entertain godly Strangers, Ministers or others, that are well recommended to him; and he should be well furnished with a good Stock of Christian-Knowledge and Experience, and capable of expressing his Sentiments with Freedom, Clearness and Propriety, for the Instruction of others, and for supporting and defending the Truths of the Gospel on all suitable Occasions; as also to be ready to improve all proper Opportunities for it.

3 *Not given to Wine, no Striker, not greedy of filthy Lucre; but patient, not a Brawler, nor covetous;*

3. He ought by no means to be a Wine-bibber, (*Mat.* xi. 19) or a Lover of Strong Drink to any Excess; nor to be a Man of a quarrelsome and furious Temper, like one whose Passions are too strong, upon Provocation, to keep his Tongue from grievous Scurrility, or his Hands from Violence; nor ought he to be eagerly fond of the Riches of this World, which are defiling Gains, especially to one of his Character, when procured by any base unworthy Means: But he should be one of a meek, calm, peaceable and forbearing Spirit, (2 *Tim.* ii. 24) not abusive, noisy and clamorous in his way of talking and disputing; nor so in Love with the Things of this World, as to prefer the Fleece to the Flock, and to seek *theirs*, rather than *them.* (2 *Cor.* xii. 14.)

4 *One that ruleth well his own House, having his Children in Subjection with all Gravity;*

4. Furthermore, if he have a Family and Children, he ought to keep up good Discipline and Decorum in his House, and maintain a prudent Authority over his Children, as well as Servants, to oblige them, like *Abraham*, (Gen. xviii. 19) to submit to regular Orders, both with Regard to Religion and Manners, as may be most honourable and comely for him and them.

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the Gospel-dispensation: But it's designed to guard against *Polygamy*, and against *Divorces* on frivolous Occasions, both which were frequent among the *Jews*, but condemned by our Lord, *Mat.* xix. 3, 9; and therefore Ministers, of all others, ought to stand clear of either of those Sins.

† *A Lover of Hospitality* properly signifies a Friend to Strangers; (φιλόξενος) and as Inns for publick Entertainment were not very usual in those Days, it was a becoming Part of the Character of Bishops to be open-hearted to poor Christians, that were Strangers, especially to such as were driven into their Neighbourhoods by Persecutions, and to Ministers that went about from Place to Place to preach the Gospel.

 5. For

5 (For if a Man know not how to rule his own House, how shall he take care of the Church of God?)

5. For if a Man have the Charge of a Family, whose Affairs are more easy to be managed, and of less Consequence, and don't know how to govern it well, as becomes the Master of his own House; How can it reasonably be expected, that he should have Prudence, Care and Resolution enough, to preside in the Management of the higher and more difficult Affairs of the Church of the living God, (*ver.* 15) in which all Things are to be done decently and in order, exactly according to his Lord's Appointment? (1 *Cor.* xiv. 40, see the Note there.)

6 Not a Novice, lest being lifted up with Pride, he fall into the Condemnation of the Devil.

6. He ought not to be a raw Upstart, nor, ordinarily, one that is but newly converted to the Faith of Christ, and planted in his Church; (νεόφυτος) lest being puffed up with a high Conceit of his Gifts, and smattering Knowledge, (which has more Heat than Light) or with popular Applause, or with the Honour of being so soon advanced to such an eminent Station in the Church, he, through the Instigation of Satan, fall into the same Condemnation, and by means of the same Pride, as the Devil himself did, when, not contented with his Station among the glorious Angels, *he left his first Habitation*, and is thereupon *reserved in everlasting Chains of Darkness to the Judgment of the Great Day*. (Jude, ver. 6.)

7 Moreover, he must have a good Report of them which are without; lest he fall into Reproach, and the Snare of the Devil.

7. Once more, He ought to be a Man of clear Reputation, not only with Christians themselves, but also among Unbelievers, whether *Jews* or Heathens, that are out of the Pale of the Church, and watch for the halting of Gospel-Professors; and especially of Gospel-Ministers; lest he give too great Occasion for Reproach upon himself, and upon the Name, Doctrine and Ways of the Lord; and so the Devil catch an Advantage against him, to the Injury of his own Soul, and of his Usefulness; and to the Discredit of Religion, the Triumph of its Adversaries, and the Grief and Stumbling of young Converts.

8 *Likewise* must *the Deacons* be *grave, not double-tongued, not given to much Wine, not greedy of filthy Lucre,*

8. And as to another Sort of Church-Officers, that are set apart, as Deacons, who are appointed to take care of the Poor, and manage the Church-Stock for serving Tables, (*Acts* vi. 2. See the Note there) They likewise, as to their *moral* Character, ought to be (σεμνούς) Men of a grave, decent and venerable Behaviour, and of good Report; (*Acts* vi. 3) not given to Dissimulation, speaking one Thing and meaning another, or carrying two Faces,, and talking at one Time contrary to what they say at another, as may best serve a Turn; nor ought they to indulge themselves in drinking too freely of any strong Liquors, which would not only be a Reproach upon their Characters, but render them very unfit for the Duties of their Office; nor ought they to be of an avaricious Temper, that would slacken their Hands to the Poor, and be a Temptation to act the Part of unfaithful Stewards, in privately appropriating some of the Church's Stock to their own Use.

9. As

Holding the Mystery of the Faith in a pure Conscience.

9. As to their *religious* Character, They ought to be sound in the Faith, stedfastly adhering to, and persevering in the pure unmixed Doctrines of the Gospel, which are indeed a Mystery to the carnal unbelieving World, and exceed the Comprehension of inlighten'd Minds themselves; the Deacons ought to hold these fast in their Belief and Profession, with all the Sincerity of a Heart, that is purified by Faith, and purged from an evil Conscience by the Blood of Christ.

10 *And let these also first be proved; then let them use the Office of a Deacon, being* found *blameless.*

10. And in order to their being chosen to this Office, They, as well as Pastors, ought to be first tried, proved and approved of, as to their moral and religious Character; and then, being found unblameable with regard to any notorious Crime, or any remarkable Defect in the forementioned Qualifications, they should be introduced into the Office, and intrusted with the whole Business of a Deacon in all its Parts.

11 *Even so* must their *Wives* be *grave, not Slanderers, sober, faithful in all Things.*

11. In like Manner (if they are in a married State) their Wives, for the Credit of Religion, suitable to the near Relation in which they stand to these Church-Officers, ought to be Persons of a grave, chaste and decent Behaviour, free from all Lightness of Temper, Words, Dress and Deportment; they ought not to be Defamers of others by false Accusations, (μη διαβόλους) which is the very Spirit of the Devil himself; much less should they be Talebearers of injurious Things, especially to the Poor, lest the Deacons, their Husbands, be thereby prejudiced against them: But they should be (νηφαλίους) watchful over their Tongues and Passions, temperate in eating and drinking, and careful in Family-œconomy within their own Sphere, from whence the Husband may take Hints for prudent and frugal Management in supplying the Wants of the Poor; and they ought to be, not only faithful to the Marriage-Bed, but just and true to all the Trusts committed to them, with Faithfulness to God, to their Husbands, and others, never daring to purloin, or embezzle any of the Church's Treasure.

12 *Let the Deacons be the Husbands of one Wife, ruling their Children, and their own Houses well.*

12. The Deacons also, as well as Pastors, (*ver.* 2. See the Note there) ought to avoid the Sin of Polygamy and unlawful Divorces, keeping to one Wife as long as she lives; and whether they have Children, or other Members of their Families, they, as Persons placed in a public Station of a religious Nature, ought to set a good Example to others, by maintaining a due Decorum in the Order of their Houses.

13 *For they that have used the Office of a Deacon well, purchase to themselves a*

13. They onght carefully to attend to these Things: For such as have acquitted themselves with Fidelity, and for any Length of Time, in discharging the Deacon's Office, well deserve, and will certainly obtain high Degrees of Honour.

good Degree, and great Boldness in the Faith, which is in Christ Jesus.

Honour and Respect in the Church; * and, in that Way, may warrantably hope to acquire and increase in Gifts and Graces suitable to their Stations; and they will be embolded, from the Testimony of their own Consciences to their Fidelity, and from the just Reputation they have gained in the Church and the World, to be open, free and couragious in their Profession of the pure and unmix'd Doctrine of Christ, and of their Faith in him, whereby they have derived Grace from him, to enable them to be faithful in fulfilling their Trust for his Glory.

14 *These Things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly:*

14. I write these Things, in brief, for your Direction, and to be communicated, as there may be Occasion, to others; hoping at the same Time to have an Opportunity, e'er long, of coming to you at *Ephesus*, or elsewhere, to give you still farther Instructions.

15 *But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the House of God, which is the Church of the living God, the Pillar and Ground of the Truth.*

15. But if God in his Providence should order my being detained longer from you, than may be expected, I send this Letter, to show how you ought to conduct yourself in what relates to the House, which God has built for himself, and is the sole Proprietor of; not an House made with Hands, like that which he caused to be built to his own Name at *Jerusalem*, (*1 Kings* viii. 10.) much less like the Temples, that Heathens have erected to their lifeless Idols; but an House of a spiritual Nature, consisting of credible Professors of Christ's Name, who, as lively Stones built together, (1 *Pet.* ii. 5.) make up the Church of the only living and true God, which he animates by his Spirit, and in which he dwells after a more excellent Manner, than he ever did in the Temple of *Solomon* itself, though he filled *that* with a Glory: (*1 Kings* viii. 10.) The Strength, Ornament and Safety of this Church is altogether spiritual, of a different, and incomparably nobler Kind, than any Pillar and Basis of a material Temple can be, † 'Tis the sound Truth

* The *good Degree* which they purchase, or procure to themselves, seems rather to relate to the Honour they should rise to in the Esteem of the Church, than to their Advancement to the Pastoral Office: For that Office is a *distinct Order* from the Deacon's, and not a *different Degree* of the same Order; and the Work of a *Deacon*, being chiefly to attend the temporal Affairs of the Church in serving Tables, has very little Tendency to a Preparation for the Office of the Ministry, which is of a spiritual Nature, as it principally lies in Persons *continually giving themselves to Prayer, and to the Ministry of the Word.* (Acts vi. 2, 3, 4.) Accordingly the learned Dr. *Owen* conjectnres, that this *good Degree*, (βαθμος) which signifies *a Step*, or a Seat a little exalted in an Assembly, to hear or speak, alludes to the Custom of sitting in the *Jewish* Synagogues, which had some Seats raised above others for Persons to sit in, according to their Dignity; and so it may *metaphorically* signify some Place of Eminence in a Church-Assembly, which is due to such as have used the Office of a Deacon well, where, with Boldness and Confidence, they may assist in the Management of the Affairs of the Church, as this belongs to a Profession of the Faith, which is in Christ Jesus. (See the Doctor's true Nature of a Gospel-Church, Page 186, [illegible]

† *The Pillar and Ground of Truth* is referr'd by some to the *Church*, and by others to *Timothy* and *Gospel-Ministers*. But *the Truth of the Gospel* is more properly the Pillar and Ground of the Church, than the Church is of the Truth; and the Church can't possibly be the Pillar of Truth any otherwise, than as it holds forth and maintains the Truth, which itself is built upon; and tho' the Apostles are called *Pillars*, Gal. ii. 9; yet they can't be said to be so in their own Persons, but only as in their Ministrations they supported the Gospel-Doctrine concerning Christ, as the Foundation of the Church, 1 *Cor.* iii.

Truth of the Gospel, of which Christ is the Sum and Substance, and which you and all faithful Pastors are to preach and maintain in all holy Ministrations.

16 *And without Controversy, great is the Mystery of Godliness: God was manifest in the Flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the World, received up into Glory.*

16. And it must be confessedly owned, (ὁμολογουμένως) that the true Doctrine of the Gospel, which is according to Godliness, (*Chap.* vi. 3.) is a great, glorious and incomprehensible Mystery; (See the Note on 1 *Cor.* ii. 7.) some of the principal Articles of which are these, namely, That the eternal Son of God, who is strictly and properly God, together with the Father and Spirit; even *God over all blessed for ever*, (John i. 14. and Rom. ix. 5.) was manifested, for the most important Purposes of Redemption and Salvation, in his incarnate State; and so was *Immanuel, God with us:* (Mat. i. 21, 23.) And, having satisfied divine Justice by his Obedience, Sufferings and Death, he was publicly acquitted and accepted of God, as the righteous Head of the Church, and was cleared of all the vile Reproaches of his Enemies, in his Resurrection; by a Concurrence of the holy Spirit with his own Power, as a divine Person; (See the Note on *Rom.* i. 4) and so he was raised again for our Justification from all the Offences, for which he was delivered to Death: (*Rom.* iv. 25.) He was after that seen of Angels, and honourably witness'd unto, in his Ascension, (*Acts* i. 10.) vast Multitudes of which surrounded him, as his adoring Servants and Courtiers, in his Triumphal Entrance into Heaven: (*Ps.* lxviii. 17.) And, in Consequence of all this, he was preached, as the atoning, risen and exalted Saviour, to the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*; and was believed on by abundantly more *Gentiles*, than *Jews*; * and so was received in

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iii. 10, 11, which, on that Account, is called *the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-Stone*; (Ephes. ii. 10.) and the Doctrine of *Peter*'s Confession, or Christ, whom he confessed, is called *the Rock, on which he would build his Church.* (Mat. xvi. 18. See the Note there) It therefore seems to me that, in Opposition to the Pillars and Foundation of a material Temple, which is here alluded to, *the Truth of the Gospel, or Christ* as exhibited in the Gospel, is meant by the *Pillar and Ground of Truth*, on which the Church stands, as its Foundation and Support: Accordingly *this Truth* is spoken of under the Appellation of the *Mystery of Godliness*; and several Articles of it are specified in the following Verse.

* Various have been the labour'd Interpretations of the several Clauses in this Verse, and Attempts to range them all in a consistent Order of Time, which I think ought to be attended to; but none, that I have been able to consult, have given me Satisfaction in making both the Sense and Order agree: The greatest Difficulty lies in giving such an Account of *justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels,* and *received up to Glory,* as may be adjusted to a regular Succession of the other intervening Events here recited. All these Passages therefore are paraphrased in such a Manner, as I apprehend to be just, and fully to comport with the due Order, in which they stand. I suppose the chief Objection, by many at least, will be made against the Construction here given of *received up into Glory*, which my Thoughts had turn'd to before I saw those of Dr. *Benson*'s Friend upon it, some Part of which surprisingly fell in with, and help'd to confirm my own. His Words, as quoted by the Dr. in his Note on this Place, so far as they are to my Purpose, are these, " If this be the true Sense of ἀνελήφθη ἐν δόξῃ (i. e.) *was gloriously received*, the Order of the several Articles may be very just; for, upon our Lord's being *preached unto the Gentiles, he was believed on in the World, and met with a glorious Reception:* For what Multitudes in the Apostolic Age embraced the Christian Religion? And in Favour of this Interpretation it may be observed that ἀνελήφθη does frequently signify *was received*, without denoting any Thing of ascending or descending. See *Acts* xx. 13, 14. and xxiii. 31. *Ephes.* vi. 13. 2 *Tim.* iv. 11." To which I would add, that (ἐν δόξῃ)

in a glorious Manner by them, who flock'd in Crowds to him, under the glorious Dispensation of the Spirit, which he shed down abundantly from on high; and they were wrought upon to embrace him with Alacrity and Joy, and to make an open and honourable Profession of him in all the Glory of his Person, Mediation and Exaltation.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a high Esteem should we have of the Churches, which God has erected in our World! Churches, which he, as the living God, animates by his Spirit, and dwells in as in his own House. What suitable Officers has he appointed to attend their spiritual and temporal Concerns! And what admirable Directions has he given about them, that none unqualified may be chosen to such important Stations, and none may misbehave in them! How good and honourable, and yet laborious a Work is it, to have a pastoral Oversight of Souls, and their spiritual Concerns! But how many are the excellent Qualifications necessary for it! Persons called to this Office ought to be skilful in the Word of Righteousness, fit to teach others, and not raw Upstarts, lest they be puffed up with Pride, which was the Sin and Ruin of the Devil: They are to be Men of blameless Morals, of Prudence, Faithfulness and Gravity, Generosity and Affability, in every Relation of Life; keeping the Families and Children under their Care in good Order, and governing their own Passions and Appetites, Tongues and Hands, with Moderation and Decency, lest they fall into Reproach, and Satan and his Emissaries take an Advantage against them. And in how many Things should Deacons, together with their Wives, copy after them! Officers of this Sort, who have the Care of the temporal Concerns of the Church, should hold the Mystery of Faith in a good Conscience, and be very exact in their Morals: And the more diligent, faithful, prudent and compassionate they are in discharging the Duties of their Trust, the higher Honour and Esteem they will rise to in the Church, and the more courageous will they grow in the Profession of their Faith in Christ. Happy Souls, that are enabled to act up to all these Characters and Duties, in their respective Stations! But how careful should they be that the Church may not sink for want of having the Truth of the Gospel for its Foundation and Support! O the unfathomable Depth, Importance and Glory of the great Mystery of Godliness, as it shines forth in God manifested in the Flesh to make Atonement for Sin; raised from the Dead for the Justification of his Person and Cause, and of Believers in him; beheld, witness'd to and ador'd by the holy Angels in his Ascension to Heaven; preached with wide Extent to the *Gentile*-World; and believed on by Multitudes of them, who received him in a glorious Manner, suitable to his own Exaltation, as God-Man Mediator on his Throne!

δοξη) *in Glory* signifies and is render'd *glorious*, 2 Cor. iii. 7, 8, 11; and *Riches in Glory* (εν δοξη) signifies *glorious Riches*, Phil. iv. 19: 'Tis also well known that the Preposition (εν) *in* very often signifies, and is render'd *with*, as in *Mat.* iii. 11. *Mark* i. 23. *Luke* iv. 32. 1 *Cor.* ii. 4. *Ephes.* vi. 2, and many other Places; so that *in Glory* might more justly be render'd *with Glory*, than *into Glory*: And *justified in the Spirit* seems plainly to relate to the signal Testimony, which the holy Spirit gave to our blessed Lord, in raising him from the Dead, as a just or righteous Person, who, having fulfilled the Righteousness of the Law and satisfy'd divine Justice, as the Substitute of his People, ought no longer to be detain'd under the Power of Death: For, otherwise, *the Resurrection of* Christ is left out of this *great Mystery of Godliness*, though 'tis one of the most remarkable and important Branches of it; and this is here placed between his being *manifested in the Flesh*, and *seen of Angels* when they attended him, as a grand Re- Retinue, in his Ascension to Glory.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

The Apostle informs Timothy, *by the Spirit of Prophecy, of Departures from the Faith in various Instances, that began already to appear, and wou'd issue in the grand Apostacy of after-Times,* 1—5. *And, with reference thereunto, gives him several Directions, with suitable Motives to enforce them, for a due Discharge of the Duties of his Office,* 6—16.

TEXT.

1 NOW *the Spirit speaketh expresly, that in the latter Times some shall depart from the Faith, giving heed to seducing Spirits, and Doctrines of Devils;*

PARAPHRASE.

1. NOW to caution you and all others, whether Ministers, or Christians of every Character, against certain gross Errrors, which, in Opposition to the glorious *Mystery of Godliness*, (Chap. iii. 16.) will be *a Mystery of Iniquity*; (2 Thess. ii. 7.) and which begins already to work, and will hereafter have a much wider, and more terrible Spread; 'Tis proper to acquaint you, that the Spirit of God foretels in the inspired Writings, * and most expresly and clearly by immediate Revelation to me, that in a future Time of this last Age, or Dispensation of God toward the Church, † there will arise many false Professors of Christianity, that will apostatize (αποςησονλαι) from the pure Doctrines of Faith, as contained in the Gospel; and will attend to Persons of an intriguing Temper, under the Influence of infernal Spirits; § and so will be misled into the idolatrous Prin-

* *The Spirit says expresly.* Mr. *Joseph Mede*, in his Apostacy of the latter Times (*Chap.* xvi. *p.* 821, &c. of his Works) supposes this to refer to what is written *Daniel* xi. 36; others take it to refer to our Lord's Predictions of *many false Prophets, that should arise, and deceive many*: (Mat. xxiv. 11.) But as the Apostle had so clearly and expresly wrote upon this Point in his Second Epistle to the *Thessalonians*, (*Chap.* ii.) before he sent this Epistle to *Timothy*, Why may we not understand him to mean that the Spirit had in an immediate Manner revealed it to him, and there, as well as here, spoke of it by him?

† *In the latter Times* (εν υςεροις καιροις) signifies in the last Dispensation of God under the Messiah's Reign; so that any Period, within the Compass of this last Age, may properly be said to be *in the latter Times*: And tho' there were some Beginnings of Apostacy in the Apostle's Days, that tended to the grand one, as may be gathered from 2 *Thess.* ii. 7; yet what he had principally in View was, I think, to come to pass in some Ages after that Time, as may appear from what he adds 2 *Thess.* ii. 7—11. It was nevertheless proper for *Timothy* to know, and give Notice of this Apostacy to the Christians of his Day, that they might be the better guarded against every Thing of that Aspect; because Corruptions of this Tendency began already to work in Judaizers, who were for keeping up the Distinction of Meats, and a Show of Humility; were for worshipping of Angels, and embracing other Errors, that were broached by false Apostles, and deceitful Workers; an Account of which is given at large in Dr. *Whitby*'s Note on this Text. But we can't justly infer from thence, as the Doctor would, that the Apostle had not a further Eye upon a still more flagrant and general Apostacy; since, notwithstanding all the Doctor's labour'd, and seemingly forced Attempts to the contrary, the Apostle plainly points to *this* in those Passages of the Second Epistle to the *Thessalonians* above referr'd to, and since he wrote for the Use of the Church in all succeeding Generations.

§ The Spirit, Principles and Practices of the Antichristian-Church of *Rome* so exactly match with the Description given, in this and the two next Verses, of these Seducers, and their Corruptions, that any one may easily read their Character in it: For they have most notoriously apostatized from the primitive Faith of the Gospel; Their Doctrine of worshipping Angels and departed Saints, and making Use of them, as Mediators, is apparently the Doctrine of *Demons*, in the nearest Affinity to that, which was found among the Heathens; their Methods of propagating their Religion, by spurious Legends, forged

Principles and Practices of worshipping Angels and departed Saints, in such a Manner, as very nearly resembles the religious Honours, which are paid by Heathens to their Demons, whom they worship, as Mediators between their superior Gods and themselves.

2 *Speaking Lies in Hypocrisy, having their Conscience seared with a hot Iron;*

2. The Methods, that these Seducers will take to draw many into their own pernicious Errors, will be, by uttering Abundance of Falshoods to delude them, and establish their own Authority, under hypocritical Pretences of Zeal for Religion; and they will not stick at any iniquitous Measures to carry on and effect their own corrupt Designs; their Consciences being as insensible of Good and Evil, and of the dreadful Consequences of their Guilt, as Flesh, that is sear'd with a hot Iron, becomes callous and incapable of feeling.

3 *Forbidding to marry,* and commanding *to abstain from Meats, which God hath created to be received, with Thanksgiving of them which believe and know the Truth.*

3. Some of the Errors which they will vent and propagate are, prohibiting Marriage to some Sorts of Persons, and so disannulling the Order of the God of Nature, and exposing them to all Temptations of Unchastity; as also obliging People to abstain from some Kinds of Food, which God created for the Sustenance of Man, and now, under the Gospel-Dispensation, (which has taken away all former legal Distinctions of clean and unclean Meats) allows all Sorts of wholesome Flesh to be eaten, with Moderation and Sobriety, at all Times, as Occasions require, with Thankfulness to him, for providing them, and for allowing all Christians to eat of them with a Covenant-right, who believe the Truth, as 'tis in Jesus, and understand and make a conscientious prudent Use of the Gospel-Doctrine of Christian-Liberty, as to that Point.

4 *For every Creature of God* is *good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with Thanksgiving:*

4. For every Creature, that God has made, is in itself good, as it came out of his Hand for the Purposes, for which he created it; and nothing that is proper for Food is to be scrupled or forbidden, provided it be received with religious Gratitude and Acknowledgments of God, as the Author and Giver of it.

5 *For it is sanctified by the Word of God and Prayer.*

5. For 'tis sanctified to our lawful Use by the Gospel of the ever blessed God, which has taken away all ceremonial Uncleanness from it; as also by his commanding a Blessing upon it; (*Mat.* iv. 4.) and by Prayer, according to the laudable Custom at Meals, to implore his Blessing upon it for the Refreshment of animal Nature, that it may be fitted for his Service; and after the Refreshment, to bless the Lord for it, (*Deut.* viii. 10, and see the Note on *Mat.* xiv. 19.)

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forged Miracles, and fabulous Stories, under hypocritical Pretences of Zeal for God, while Interest is their principal Aim; their astonishing Hardness, and Insensibility of any moral Evil in the most vile, criminal, and murderous Methods for extirpating, what they call Heresy, and serving the Church; their forbidding Priests, Monks and Nuns to marry; and enjoining Abstinence from Flesh in Lent, and on Wednesdays and Fridays, all the Year round, so evidently answer the Apostle's distinguishing Characters of their Apostacy, that there need no plainer Marks to warrant an Application of them to that Antichristian-Church. (See also the Notes on 2 *Thess.* ii. 3, 4. and 2 *Tim.* iii. 1.)

6 *If thou put the Brethren in remembrance of these Things, thou shalt be a good Minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the Words of Faith, and of good Doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.*

6. If you, my dear Son in the Faith, shall carefully from Time to Time remind, and warn the Christian-Brethren of all the Things before-mention'd, and particularly of this grand Apostacy, some Tendencies to which already appear, (See the two last Notes on *ver.* 1.) that they may be the more upon their Watch and Guard against every, the least Approach to it, You will acquit yourself with Honour, as a useful, wise and faithful Servant of Jesus Christ, that has his Glory at Heart, and will order your Ministrations suitable to the Circumstances of the Times, and the present Danger of Errors and Corruptions creeping into the Church; and will therein approve yourself to have been well taught, refreshed and strengthened in your own Soul, as having thoroughly digested the pure Doctrines of Faith in Christ, and of every other Evangelical Truth, that is connected with it; the Knowledge and Experience of which, you have sought after, and happily attained. (παρηκολούθηκας, See the Note on *Luke* i. 3.)

7 *But refuse profane and old Wives Fables, and exercise thyself* rather *unto Godliness.*

7. But as to the fabulous Traditions of the *Jews*, and their endless Genealogies, which I have already cautioned against, as tending to corrupt the Simplicity of the Gospel, rather than to godly edifying, (*Chap.* i. 4.) and which are indeed as foolish as the idle Stories, that old Women delight to tell Children, Pay no Manner of Regard to these; reject and have nothing to do with them; but, like Athleticks in the *Grecian* Games, (γύμναζε σεαυτὸν) exert yourself with the utmost Labour, Diligence and Vigour, in promoting the Doctrines and Duties of true Piety to God through Jesus Christ, and in exemplifying the Beauties of practical Godliness in your own Life and Conversation.

8 *For bodily Exercise profiteth little: But Godliness is profitable unto all Things, having Promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come.*

8. For (γυμνασία) the greatest Pains that can be taken in meer external Acts of Religion, in which the Body only is engaged, is little worth, neither pleasing to God, nor of any good Account to a Man's own Soul. (*Mat.* xv. 8, 9.) But evangelical, vital and practical Godliness, in Heart and Life, is every Way advantageous, with regard to all Things that concern us; there being express Promises, even under the Gospel-State, (*Chap.* ii. 15. *Mat.* vi. 25,—33. *Rom.* viii. 28. and *Phil.* iv. 19.) of the Blessing of God, as annexed to it, in what relates to the Necessaries, Conveniences, and a sanctified Use of all Circumstances of this present Life; and still more excellent and abundant Promises, relating to the Glory and Blessedness of the better World to come: Yea, *this is* emphatically *the Promise, that he has promised us*, even *eternal Life* (1 John ii. 25.)

9 *This* is *a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation.*

9. This Promise, with all the rest, may be fully depended upon, as a certain Truth, which God in Faithfulness will make good; and 'tis worthy the highest Regard, Esteem and Entertainment, as a rich Encouragement to serve the Lord, and cleave to him, amidst all Difficulties, Oppositions and Dangers; how many soever apostatize from him.

 10. For

10 For therefore we both labour, and suffer Reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all Men, specially of those that believe.

10. For 'tis in Consideration of this important Truth, and of the assured Hopes of its Accomplishment to ourselves, that we, the Apostles and Servants of Christ, undergo great Fatigues in our holy Ministrations to advance his Glory, Interest and Kingdom, and gain Souls to him; and that we patiently and cheerfully bear the most contemptuous Scorn, and infamous Revilings, from our Adversaries, for his Sake; because we firmly rely on the Power, Truth and Faithfulness of the Almighty and ever-living God, who has Life in himself, and is the Fountain of both natural and spiritual Life, and of every Blessing that is needful for the Support and Comfort of either of them, as he is the great Preserver of all Mankind, and the Author and Giver of all their temporal Salvations and Deliverances, and, in a providential Way, is good to all; (*Ps.* cxlv. 9.) and he is so, by the particular Care of his Providence, and in a special Way of Covenant-Love and Faithfulness to true Believers, with respect to all the promised good Things, that pertain to the present Life; as well as is most eminently so, with respect to an everlasting Salvation, in that which is to come, (*ver.* 8.)

11 These Things command and teach.

11. These Things are of such vast Consequence to the Encouragement of Faith and Holiness, that I would have you inculcate them, by divine Authority, upon the Consciences of your Hearers; and illustrate and explain them at large, in the Course of your Ministry, that they may see the Excellence and Advantage of true Religion and Godliness.

12 Let no Man despise thy Youth, but be thou an Example of the Believers, in Word, in Conversation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity.

12. Let it be your Study and Endeavour, by divine Grace, to acquit yourself herein with such Diligence, Gravity, good Judgment, Prudence and Fidelity to your Trust, and with such Evidence of your own heartily believing, esteeming, and living under the Power of what you preach to others, that none may have Occasion to slight, and contemn you and your Admonitions, your Office, or your Management of it, on account of your Youth: But, the more effectually to prevent this, Let it be your great Concern, that you yourself may be an amiable and shining Example to all other Believers, in the Excellency of your Doctrine and edifying Discourse; in the Regularity of your religious and moral Behaviour; in the Sincerity and Ardour of your Love to God and Christ and immortal Souls, to Truth and Holiness, and to all Fellow-Ministers and Christians; in your Spiritual-Mindedness, fervent Zeal for the Glory of God, and Aboundings in all the Fruits of the Spirit; in the steady and lively Exercise and Profession of your Faith, and maintaining the Doctrines of it; and in all (αγνεια) Chastity and Purity of Heart and Life.

13 Till I come, give Attendance to Read-

13. You may have still further Directions from me by Word of Mouth, when, according to my Hope, (*Chap.* iii. 14.)

ing, to Exhortation, to Doctrine.

14.) I may have Opportunity of ſeeing you. In the mean while, Attend to your Charge, as you ought to do all the Days of your Life; and that you may in the beſt Manner fulfil it, Addict yourſelf to, and ſpend much of your Time in reading, as well as praying-over, the holy Scriptures of the Old Teſtament, and this Epiſtle, together with all other inſpired Writings of the New Teſtament, that are extant, for the Improvement of your own Soul in Knowledge and ſpiritual Gifts, Grace and Comfort, and further fitting you for public Service: And as in this Way you ſhould lay in, ſo I would have you lay out your Stock of Chriſtian-Knowledge and Experience, by exhorting and comforting others, and ſpreading ſound Doctrine among them, for their Converſion, Edification and Eſtabliſhment.

14 *Neglect not the Gift that is in thee, which was given thee by Prophecy, with the laying on of the Hands of the Preſbytery.*

14. And as God has richly furniſhed you with extraordinary Gifts for this Service, Take heed that you don't neglect to ſtir them up, and to exerciſe and improve them to the beſt Advantage, which were abundantly conferr'd upon you for preaching the Goſpel, and fulfilling the Whole of your Miniſtry, according to the remarkable Prophecies, that have been deliver'd by ſome inſpir'd Men of late concerning you; (*Chap.* i. 18.) and which were communicated to you particularly at your Ordination; as a Signal of which, I and other Elders, who joined with me in that Solemnity, laid our Hands upon you. (2 *Tim.* i. 6.)

15 *Meditate upon theſe Things; give thyſelf wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all.*

15. Let the Things that I have been mentioning, as the Subject of your Miniſtry and Rule of Conduct, and what I have now been ſaying about reading the Scriptures, and the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, which you are favoured with, be frequently and ſeriouſly reflected upon, to affect your own Heart with them, and to excite your Diligence in improving them; and meditate cloſely and ſeriouſly upon the Holy Scriptures, as well as read them: Let your Attention to theſe Things, and your Miniſtrations of them, and Prayer for a Bleſſing upon them, be the intire Buſineſs of your Life, without entangling yourſelf with the Affairs of this World; (2 *Tim.* ii. 4) And (ἐν τούτοις ἴσθι) let your whole Soul be in them, as in your proper Sphere and delightful Element, that your Proficiency in Wiſdom, Gifts and Grace, and in Experience of God's being with you, may evidently appear, in all Things, to all about you.

16 *Take heed unto thyſelf, and unto thy Doctrine; continue in them; For in doing this thou ſhalt both ſave thyſelf, and them that hear thee.*

16. In the firſt Place, Be very careful in what concerns yourſelf, as a Miniſter and Chriſtian. See to it, that you and your Services be accepted of God in Chriſt; that your Heart be right with him, as to its Principles, Frame and Temper, Motives and Ends; that your Gifts be duly cultivated; and that the whole of your Behaviour toward God, yourſelf and others, be well-pleaſing in his Sight: And then take heed what Doctrine you preach, and how you preach it, that it be ſound and clear, according to the Word of God, important and ſeaſonable, evangelical and

practical;

practical; and that it be well explained, confirmed, defended, and improved various Ways, as Occasions require, and your Subject leads you: And persist stedfastly—in the Practice of all this, as your proper and stated Work to the End of your Days: For in so doing, and by means thereof, you, under the Influence of the blessed Spirit, will be instrumental to the final Salvation of your own Soul, and the Souls of many that attend your Ministry, and hear with the Obedience of Faith.

RECOLLECTIONS.

'Tis melancholy to think of the woful Apostacies from the Faith of the Gospel, that have been in all Ages; but it needs not seem strange to us, since they were foretold by the Spirit of Prophecy: And how plainly has it pointed out the seducing hypocritical Arts of Falshood and Deceit, that are used, without Shame or Conscience, by the Apostate Church of *Rome*, together with their worshipping of deified Saints, forbidding Marriages, and enjoining Abstinence from Meats, which God created, and allows under the Gospel-Dispensation to be moderately used, with Thanksgiving for them, and Prayer for his Blessing upon them! With what Contempt should we reject the Errors, that are built upon uncertain Traditions, as we would idle Stories that are told to please Children! And instead of resting in formal bodily Services, that turn to no good Account, How concerned should we be to live in the Practice of vital Religion, which has a gracious Entail of Blessings upon it, by the Promise of God! He, as a bountiful Benefactor, affords temporal Preservations, Deliverances and Mercies to Mankind in general; and by the particular Care of his Providence, as a Covenant God, he gives them all in a Way of special Love, and completes them in eternal Salvation, to every true Believer: What important Truths are these, and how worthy of the most hearty Entertainment! With what Care should Ministers inculcate them on those that are under their Charge, for their Caution on the one Hand, and Encouragement on the other; humbly trusting in the Ever-living God, for their own Support and Comfort, amidst all the Reproaches, Difficulties aud Labours they undergo for Christ's Sake! And while, together with this, they are exemplary in Faith, Love and all Holiness, they will approve themselves as good Ministers of Jesus Christ, and good Proficients in the Doctrine and Grace of Faith: But, in order hereunto, How much Diligence ought they to use in studying, reading, and improving the Gifts God has bestowed upon them; and in giving themselves intirely to these Exercises, and to Preaching and Prayer! And what need have they to take heed first to their own State, Temper and Conversation; and then to their Doctrine, with Perseverance therein, as the Means of God's appointing and blessing, for the final Salvation of their own Souls, and the Souls of their Hearers!

CHAP. V.

The Apostle gives Orders how to behave towards elder, and younger Men and Women, 1, 2. And toward poor Widows, 3—8. Describes the Characters of such Widows, as are, or are not, proper to be maintained by the Church, and taken into its Service, 9—16. Shews the Respect that is to be paid to those, that are Elders by Office, 17—19. But charges Timothy *to take due Care in rebuking Offenders of all Ranks and Stations, in ordaining Ministers, and in using such moderate Refreshments, as were necessary for his own weak State of Health, 20—25.*

TEXT.

TEXT.

1 REbuke not an Elder, but entreat him *as a Father*; and *the younger Men as Brethren*;

PARAPHRASE.

1. AS you, my Son *Timothy*, are a young Man, (*Chap.* iv. 12) who ought, as such, to behave with the utmost Prudence and Decency, to screen you from Contempt on account of your Youth; and *as the hoary Head is a Crown of Glory, if it be found in a Way of Righteousness*, (Prov. xvi. 31) I would advise you to take Care that, whatever sinful Infirmities attend any antient Christian †, you don't assume an Air of haughty, magisterial and severe Authority in reproving one of such venerable Years; (and the same may be observed much more, with respect to one that bears the Office of an Elder in the Church) But treat him with Honour and Respect in your Converses with him; (*Lev.* xix. 32) and deliver your Exhortations to him, rather in a Way of earnest Intreaty to depart from all Iniquity, with a due Deference to his Age and Standing, such as you would show, in like Cases, to your own Father himself after the Flesh: And let young Men, that are more on a Level, as to Years, with yourself, and need Reproof, be dealt with in a more free, and yet meek, affable and affectionate Manner, as you would treat your own Brethren in Nature, as well as in Grace.

2 *The elder Women as Mothers*; *the younger as Sisters, with all Purity.*

2. In like Manner behave toward godly Women advanced in Years, with such a Sort of Reverence, even when you would correct any Fault in them, as is due from Children to their own Mothers: And manage your Admonitions of young Women that profess Christianity, as you would in giving them to your own Sisters; and be sure let it be with such Modesty and Chastity in your Looks, Speech and Behaviour, as shall give no Occasion of Reproach to your own, or her Character.

3 *Honour Widows that are Widows indeed.*

3. As to believing Women, that are poor Widows, and, as such, are apt to think themselves the more neglected and imposed upon, Pay all becoming Respect to them, and take care that they be honourably provided for by the Church *, if

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† An *Elder* here seems most directly to mean, not one that is so *by Office*, as it does, *ver.* 17; but old or *elderly Men*: For 'tis in this Place opposed, not to private Members of the Church, but to *young Men*, as *elderly Women* also are to the *younger* in the next Verse: And yet as, in the Reason of Things, they that are *Elders by Office* are to be treated in as respectful a Manner, at least, as is here directed, we may very well include them. But the *Rebuke* here intended seems to relate to the *lesser Infirmities*, that older and younger Christians are liable to, rather than to infamous and *notorious Crimes*: For, whatsoever a Person's Age or Station be, *Timothy* was solemnly charged publickly to rebuke such Sinners, *ver.* 20; and yet, even in this Case, a prudent Decency was, doubtless, to be exercised in reproving them, suitable to their Years and Stations in the Church.

* It appears from *ver.* 4 and 8, that the *Honour* here meant relates to the *Allowance*, which was to be made to these Widows of Things needful and convenient for their Subsistence; and the Word is used in the same Sense, *ver.* 17, as is evident from what follows in that and the next Verse: (See the Note there) Accordingly our Lord, speaking of the corrupt Traditions of the *Jews*, which discharged Children from contributing to the Support of their poor Parents, in case they had devoted to God what was

if they are indeed desolate, according to the strongest Sense of that Term, as not only bereaved of their Husbands, but also destitute of any near of kin, that are able and willing to support them.

4 But if any Widow have Children or Nephews, let them learn first to shew Piety at home, and to requite their Parents; for that is good and acceptable before God.

4. But if any religious Widows have Children or Grandchildren, (ἔκγονα) that are capable of assisting them, and supplying their Necessities; Let such of their Descendents be taught (as they ought to learn) their Duty toward their Parents, according to our Lord's Instructions, (*Mark* vii. 10—12) and toward God therein, who has commanded them to honour their *Mothers*, as well as their Fathers, (*Ex.* xx. 12) in conscientiously doing all they can to shew a Reverence of them, and provide for such of them as need their Help; and so make them the most grateful Returns for all their Trouble, Tenderness, Care and Pains, Love and Solicitude, Kindness and Expence, in bringing them up, and conducting them through all the exercising Follies and Dangers of their Childhood and Youth, till they settled them in the World: For such a Behaviour toward them is in itself just and equitable, worthy and honourable; (καλὸν) and is highly pleasing in the Sight of God, who has fixed the Relation, and the Duties of it, between Parents and Children.

5 Now she that is a Widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in Supplications and Prayers Night and Day.

5. Now a Widow *indeed*, that is a proper Object of the Church's Charity, is one who, being in indigent Circumstances, destitute of Relations to relieve her, trusts in the Lord to take Care of her for Time, as well as Eternity, and to supply her with needful Things; and is one who, with an habitually religious Disposition, continues Morning and Evening, and frequently on all Occasions, to offer up her humble Addresses to God in earnest Petitions and Pleas, according to her Faith in his Providence, for whatsoever he sees to be best for her.

6 But she that liveth in Pleasure, is dead while she liveth.

6. But the Widow that gives herself up to a jovial, loose and voluptuous Way of Living, under the Power of carnal Inclinations, is in a spiritual Sense dead; dead to God, and *dead in Trespasses and Sins*, (Ephes. ii. 1) while in a natural Sense she is alive, and lives in wanton Pleasure; and so ought neither to be maintained, nor own'd by the Church, as any Member of their holy Body.

7 And these Things give in Charge, that they may be blameless.

7. And these Things are of so great Consequence to the moral and religious Life, and to the Reputation, Beauty and Order of Churches and Families, that you ought to declare and solemnly enforce them, in your public Ministry and private Conversation, to the End that these Sorts of People may be so regular in Conduct, as not to deserve

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was necessary for their Relief, taxes it as a Breach of the Commandment to *honour their Father and Mother*, Mat. xv. 4, 5, 6, and Mark vii, 10—13; and the Apostle calls the generous Benevolence of the People at *Malta*, their *honouring* him and his Companions with *many Honours*, Acts xxviii. 10.

Rebuke (ἵνα ἀνεπίληπτοι ὦσι) for scandalous Crimes, and the Church may not be blameable for conniving at them, and misapplying their Charity.

8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own House, he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel.

8. But if there be any Professor of Christ's Name that is so very unnatural, as not to do what in him lies, according to his Circumstances, to supply the Wants of his own near Relations, especially of his own aged Parents, together with his Wife and Children, who are the principal and dearest Parts of his Family; he has practically renounced the Doctrines of Christianity; and, whatever his Pretences be, he really is worse, than one that believes nothing of them, as he not only violates the Law of Nature and Humanity, in Instances that many Heathens themselves would be ashamed of; but acts directly contrary to divine Revelation itself, which injoins all relative and social Duties.

9 Let not a Widow be taken into the Number under three-score Years old, having been the Wife of one Man,

9. If there be any poor Widow, whose Offspring either cannot, or will not relieve her, the Church ought to take care of her: But if they have their Thoughts upon her, to choose her for an Assistant to the Deacons †, in visiting and ministring to the Poor and Sick, especially of the Female Sex, she ought to be, at least, sixty Years old, and free from the Scandal of having ever been married to more than one Husband at a Time, or having causelesly put away her Husband, and been married to another. (See *Mark* x. 12, and the Note on Chap. iii. 2.)

10 Well reported of for good Works; if she have brought up Children, if she have lodged Strangers, if she have washed the Saints Feet, if she have relieved the Afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good Work.

10. She ought also, in order to her being taken into this Service, to be a Person of good Character, for having faithfully and prudently discharged the relative Duties of the married Life; as for Instance, If she has behaved well in religiously educating Children, or in hospitably receiving, and treating such godly Strangers, whether Ministers or others, as Providence has cast in her Way; if she has been ready to do the meanest Offices, for the Refreshment of such holy Persons, even to the Washing of their Feet, as is customary in these hot Countries, after travelling in Sandals; If she has ministred, with Compassion and Tenderness, by Counsel, or otherwise, to Christians in any Sort of Afflic-

† The Apostle's insisting on a Widow's being *three-score Years old, before she be taken into the Number*, leads us to consider him as speaking here, not merely of taking them into the Number of those, that were to be maintained by the Church, but of those that were also to be employ'd as *Deaconesses* in it: For *younger* Widows might be so poor and infirm, as to be proper Objects of the Church's Charity, though not fit for the Office of a Deaconess, which, in the early Ages of Christianity, might be very convenient, for preventing Scandal among Heathen-Neighbours, and Relations of such converted Women, whether young or old, as on account of Poverty, or Sickness, and other Occasions, the Officers of the Church were obliged to be very conversant with; as well as for performing the Family-Services of Women in attending Ministers, that usually travelled about to preach the Gospel; or were driven from Place to Place by Persecution; but, these Reasons now ceasing, there is not the like Occasion for Deaconesses in the present Age: And as I don't find any Institution of them, or Prescription of their Duty, as there was of *Deacons*, Acts vi. 1, 2, &c. it appears to me to be a Matter of mere Prudence in the Church to commit such Offices to Women, or not, as Circumstances require.

tion; In a Word; if, in the general Course of her Life, she has laboured, with Care and Diligence, to perform every good Office toward God and others, as Opportunity offer'd, she then may well be admitted, not only to partake of the Charity of the Church, but to do the Part of a Deaconess in it.

11 *But the younger Widows refuse. For when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry;*

11. But, if younger Widows would desire to be admitted to such a Station, it would be most prudent not to encourage, but to reject such a Motion: For when once (καταςρηνιάσωσι,) they have begun (as there may be Danger of it) to grow voluptuous and lascivious, contrary to their Profession of Christ, and to consult their own Ease and Pleasure, instead of his Honour and Service, they will be tempted to marry at any Rate, though it be into a Heathen-Family, that they may get rid of their irksome Restraints and Labours, in attending the religious Poor.

12 *Having Damnation, because they have cast off their first Faith.*

12. And they will expose themselves to Shame and Condemnation in the Eyes of the World, to the Censure of the Church, and to the righteous Judgments of God here, (See the Note on 1 *Cor.* xi. 29) as well as to eternal Damnation hereafter; because they rejected their former Profession of Faith in Christ, or renounced the Doctrine which they at first notionally believed concerning him; and deserted the Trust committed to them.

13 *And withal they learn* to be *idle, wandering about from House to House; and not only idle, but Tatlers also, and Busybodies, speaking Things which they ought not.*

13. And, together with this, such young Widows, as are more addicted to Pleasure than Business, soon contract a Habit of Idleness, and trifle away their Time in gadding about from one House to another, for Amusement and Diversion; nor do they only grow lazy Creatures, but also impertinent, flirting, loose and foolish Talkers, and officious Pryers, and Intruders into other Peoples Affairs, which don't belong to them, that they may carry Stories about, whether right or wrong, and make their own Remarks upon them, to please some, and expose others; which ought by no means to be done, but is very mischievous to the Reputation and Peace of their Neighbours and Acquaintance.

14 *I will therefore that the younger Women marry, bear Children, guide the House, give none Occasion to*

14. Instead therefore of younger Widows being admitted to any Place of Service in the Church*, I would rather advise, that they be left in such a Situation, as admits of their marrying in the Lord, if they be so disposed, and have a good Offer, that promises fair for a comfortable Mainte-

* The *younger Women* seem to me to refer to *young Widows*, who are all along the Subject of the three preceding Verses; and so it carries an Intimation of the Lawfulness of these, as well as other young Women's marrying, if there be no other Circumstance to forbid it: But 'tis not to be imagined, that when the Apostle says, *I will that they marry, and bear Children*, he meant to oblige them to marry, any more than to bear Children, whether they were inclined to the one, and had a proper Opportunity for it; or whether God should bless them with the other, or not: His Advice to *Virgins*, 1 *Cor.* vii. 34, &c. is directly contrary to any such Injunction; but what he here would suggest is, that they ought to be at Liberty, and that it would be more proper for them, to marry, &c. than to be a Burden to the Church, or put into the Office of a Deaconess.

nance;

the Adverſary to ſpeak reproachfully.

nance; and that, having entered into that Relation, they breed, nouriſh, and religiouſly educate ſuch Children, as it may pleaſe God to give them; and, being Miſtreſſes of Families, may conduct their houſhold Affairs with Faithfulneſs, Prudence and Good Houſewifry, and behave with ſuch Diligence, Sobriety and Modeſty, in all the Duties of their Relation, as to give no Advantage to any Enemies of Chriſt, that ſeek, and would gladly take it, to ſpeak evil of them, and of him and Religion on their Account.

15 *For ſome are already turned aſide after Satan.*

15. I ſpeak ſo particularly about this; becauſe there are Inſtances of ſome young Widows already, who have turned off from their Profeſſion of Chriſt, and followed the Devices of Satan in ſuch ſinful Practices, as have juſt now been mention'd. (*ver.* 11, 12, 13.)

16 *If any Man or Woman that believeth have Widows, let them relieve them, and let not the Church be charged; that it may relieve them that are Widows indeed.*

16. But, to return to the Caſe of poor aged Widows, If any Chriſtian-Man or Woman have antient needy Mothers or Grandmothers, (*ver.* 4) whoſe Huſbands are dead, ſuch Offspring of theirs, whether Sons or Daughters, ought to ſupply their Wants, in the beſt Manner, that their own Circumſtances admit of; and if they can relieve them at their own Expence, the maintaining of ſuch Widows ought not to be thrown upon the Church, which ſhould be excuſed from it, that they may have the more to ſpare for the Help and Comfort of thoſe, that are indeed deſolate Widows, as having none of their own Family to provide for them.

17 *Let the Elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double Honour, eſpecially they who labour in the Word and Doctrine.*

17. And now I am ſpeaking about the Uſe of the Church's Stock, I would recommend the paying a due Regard to ſuch Elders, as by Office are employ'd in the ſpiritual Services of the Church, that they, who are prudent and faithful in preſiding over them, (οἱ καλῶς προεστῶτες) may ſtand high in their civil Reſpect and Eſteem, and may have liberal Allowances, ſufficient to make their worldly Circumſtances eaſy, reputable and comfortable *; eſpecially thoſe of them, that

* As *Honour* includes *Maintenance*, (See the Note on *ver.* 3) *double Honour* ſeems to ſignify *great Civil Reſpect, and liberal Maintenance*, the laſt of which is referred to in the next Verſe, and the firſt in the Verſe that follows it. This *Honour* the Apoſtle orders to be paid to the *Elders that rule well, eſpecially they, who labour in the Word and Doctrine*, by which ſome think, that *ruling Elders* are diſtinguiſhed from Paſtors or *preaching Elders*, as different Officers in the Church. But it is, at leaſt, very doubtful, whether ſuch a Concluſion can be drawn from this Text: For not only the Elders, *that laboured in the Word and Doctrine*; but the Elders alſo, *that ruled well*, were to be deemed worthy of *the Honour of Maintenance*, as appears from the next Verſe. Now I can hardly believe that these Elders, (who are ſuppoſed to be engaged only in the Rule and Government of the Church, any more than its *Deacons*, were to be maintained at the Church's Coſt in their Lay Capacity, which left them at full Liberty to purſue the Buſineſs of their ſecular Callings, for their own and Family Subſiſtence: And the Reaſon, which the Apoſtle ſubjoins in the following Verſe, why *Elders* ought to be maintained by the Church, certainly relates to none, but *preaching Elders*: Nor do I recollect that Orders are ever given, in any other Part of Scripture, for the Maintenance of either Deacons, or theſe ſuppoſed ruling and non-preaching Elders; or that an Obligation can be inferred from any Paſſage of the New Teſtament, that Churches ſhould be furniſhed with ſuch Sort of Officers, though perhaps Prudence, in ſome Circumſtances of Affairs, may make them expedient. I therefore incline to think, with ſome others, that the Apoſtle intends only *preaching Elders*, when he directs *double Honour* to be paid to the *Elders, that rule well, eſpecially thoſe, who labour in the Word and Doctrine*; and that the Diſtinction lies, not in the

that are eminent and remarkably laborious in studying, and preaching the Gospel, and in spreading, maintaining and defending its pure unmixed Doctrines: Let these be honourably maintained with double Liberality, beyond such Allowances, as are to be granted to poor Widows, (*ver.* 3) according to their superior, and more important Stations, and Work in the Church, for the Service of whose Souls they spend their Time and Pains.

18 *For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the Ox that treadeth out the Corn. And, The Labourer is worthy of his Reward.*

18. For as this is equitable in itself; so the Scripture points it out as your Duty, where it says, to intimate the Reward that is due to the Servants of the Lord for their most important Labours, (See the Note on 1 *Cor.* ix. 10) *Thou shalt not muzzle the Mouth of the Ox, that treadeth out the Corn:* And our Blessed Lord himself says, with respect to his Ministring Servants, (*Mat.* x. 10) *The Workman is worthy of his Meat*, as his reasonable Reward.

19 *Against an Elder receive not an Accusation, but before two or three Witnesses.*

19. Another Part of the *Honour*, (*ver.* 17) which is to be shown to these Elders, is, that, considering their high Post in the Church, and the great Consequence of supporting their Character, in order to their Usefulness, No Accusation of any Crime be admitted or believed, and brought into the Church against any one of them; unless it be first substantially proved by, at least, two or three credible Witnesses, which are required even in ordinary Cases; (*Deut.* xix. 15. *Mat.* xviii. 16) and it ought to be deposed in the Presence of the like Number of its Members, to judge of the Credibility of what is alledged against him, before the Church takes any Cognisance of it.

20 *Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.*

20. But if, upon undeniable Proof, Elders themselves be found guilty of enormous Crimes, inconsistent with their sacred Character; In that Case, there is to be no such Respect of Persons, as to connive at their Faults; but you, as an Evangelist, ought to reprove them, as well as any other Member, for their Sin, with all becoming Authority, in the Presence of the whole Church, that not only they may reject them, in case of Obstinacy and Impenitence; but that others also, as well as these Persons themselves, may be afraid of doing any Iniquity for Time to come.

21 *I charge* thee *before God and the Lord Jesus Christ,*

21. As these are Things of vast Moment for preserving the Purity and Prosperity of the Church, and relate to the most difficult, grievous and irksome Part of your Work;

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the *Order* of Officers, but in the *Degree* of their Diligence, Faithfulness and Eminence, in *laboriously* fulfilling their ministerial Work to the Edification of the Church; and so the Emphasis is to be laid on the Word LABOUR *in the Word and Doctrine*, which has an *especially* annexed to it. Accordingly the learned Mr. *Joseph Mede* observes, that *to labour* (κοπιῶν) signifies, not simply to labour, but *to labour with much Travel and Toil*, which he supposes refers to the *Evangelists* or *Prophets*, that travelled up and down to preach the Gospel; because their Pains were more, than theirs, that were fixed Elders of certain Churches: He also gives us another Exposition, grounded on the Use of the Participle in the *Greek*, (κοπιῶντες) which is often wont to note the Reason of a Thing thus, Let Elders that rule, or govern their Flocks well, be counted worthy of double Honour, and that *chiefly* because, or in respect of their Labour in the Word and Doctrine. (See Book I. Discourse 19. Vol. I. pag. 92 of his Works.)

and

and the elect Angels, that thou observe these Things, without preferring one before another, doing nothing by Partiality.

and as your Youth may make you the more backward to engage in it, I solemnly bind it upon your Conscience, as in the Presence of the all-seeing and heart-searching God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Head of the Church, who knows all Things, and searches the Heart and Reins, (*Rev.* ii. 23) and will judge the Quick and the Dead, at his appearing and Kingdom; (2 *Tim.* iv. 1) and as in the Presence of the Blessed Angels, who, continually surrounding us, are Witnesses of what I say, and whom, in Distinction from the Fallen Angels, God has chosen to be his favourite Servants, and to be everlastingly confirmed in their holy and happy State *: Yea, I charge you, as you hope to appear with Comfort before all these, at the great Day, when our Lord shall *come in his own, and in his Father's Glory, with all the holy Angels*, that you carefully take heed to, maintain and put in Practice, the Rules I have given you, without preferring one to another, through Favour, or Affection, or prejudging before the Cause is heard and prov'd; and without the least Partiality, through Prejudice for, or against any Man whatsoever, on Account of his Station in the Church, or of any private Consideration to biass your Mind.

22 *Lay Hands suddenly on no Man, neither be Partaker of other Mens Sins: Keep thyself pure.*

22. And as Elders or Pastors themselves may be liable to Miscarriages, If you would rejoice to have as little Occasion as possible, for the disagreeable Work of rebuking them, (*ver.* 20.) It behoves you to be very cautious and careful in your Enquiries after, and well satisfied about, the Characters of such, as propose to be introduced into that sacred Office, and not hastily, inconsiderately and rashly lay your Hands on any Man to ordain him, † with a Conveyance of such extraordinary Gifts, as use to attend that Signal of them: Take heed of acting precipitately and unadvisedly herein, lest you make yourself accessary to, and so be Partaker of, the Guilt of unsound and ungodly Ministers: Stand clear of the Blame of countenancing such, and of all the sad Consequences of their Unfaithfulness, Errors and Misbehaviour, that you in

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* In whatever Sense we understand this *Charge*, as given *before the elect Angels*, it relates to them, not as Judges, but as Witnesses, and is considered in the Paraphrase both as given *before them*, according to the Supposition of their being present in religious Assemblies, who are ministring Spirits to the Heirs of Salvation, 1 *Cor.* xi. 10. *Ephes.* iii. 10. and *Heb.* i. 14; and as given to be answered before them at the Judgment of the great Day; when, for the greater Solemnity of it, Christ will come with all the holy Angels, as his glorious Attendents, *Mat.* xvi. 27, and xxv. 31 *Mark* viii. 38. and *Luke* ix. 26.

† Though conveying the Gifts of the Spirit was ordinarily by the *Apostles* laying on their Hands, yet, considering what an extraordinary Evangelist *Timothy* was, according to special foregoing Prophecies concerning him, which the Apostle takes particular Notice of, and seems to lay a great Stress upon, once and again, *Chap.* i. 12, and iv. 14, it need not be thought improbable, but that some more remarkably eminent Powers were conferred upon him, than upon other Evangelists. And why might not this of communicating the Gifts of the Spirit at Ordination, by laying on of his Hands, be one of them?

this,

this, as well as in every other respect, may be *pure from the Blood of all Men*. (Acts xx. 26.)

23 *Drink no longer Water, but use a little Wine for thy Stomach's Sake, and thine often Infirmities.*

23. Here, by the Way, let me, in the Fulness of my Heart's Concern for you, give you one Piece of tender and fatherly Advice, relating to your own Health, which ought to be consulted for the Sake of Usefulness, Though you are inclined, and undoubtedly obliged by your Office, to be an Example of all Temperance and Sobriety; yet, as your Constitution is infirm and sickly, your Labours great, and your Life very important to the Church of Christ, Don't confine yourself any longer, as, thro' too great Abstemiousness, you have done in Time past, to drink only Water; but at proper Seasons take a little Wine in Moderation, as may be needful to help your weak Stomach, and Decay of Appetite and Digestion, through the many Indispositions and Disorders of Body, that you are often attended with, by Means of hard Study and fatiguing Labour; and that threaten soon to put an End to your valuable Life and Services, for want of animal Spirits and proper Sustenance.

24 *Some Mens Sins are open before-hand, going before to Judgment; and some* Men *they follow after.*

24. But to return, As to the Cautions I have given, (*ver.* 22.) you are to proceed after a different Manner in different Cases, according to the Evidence and Reason of Things. For some Mens erroneous and sinful Principles and Practices are so notorious and open to every one's View, that they are thoroughly known before there be any Occasion for a strict Enquiry to be made into them; and so, easily lead the Way to a just Judgment of what is fit to be done in refusing to introduce them to Office in the Church: And there are others, who use so much Art, Secrecy and Hypocrisy to conceal their Sentiments and Wickedness, that it often breaks out after a Judgment of Charity has been past upon them, in order to their being ordain'd: But whether it does so, or not, you have acquitted your own Conscience, whatsoever be the Consequence as to them.*

25 *Likewise also the good Works of* some *are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.*

25. There are also some Persons whose religious Sentiments, Gifts, Graces and moral Temper and Behaviour, are so remarkably good, and obvious to all about them, as to speak for themselves, before there's any Need to scrutinize their Characters; and they may be justly deem'd fit to be admitted to the sacred Ministry; in such Cases your Way is plain: But more Caution is to be used as to others, who, tho' gracious upright Souls, are so bashful and recluse

* The *Judgment* here intended seems not to be the final Day of Account, when *God will bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret Thing, whether it be Good or Evil*: (*Eccles.* xii. 14.) For there are no Sins to be discovered *after*, but all will be made manifest *in*, that Day: But I rather think that the Judgment here meant is (as the Context, *ver.* 22, directs) to be understood of the Judgment, that is to be past, in just and charitable Constructions, upon Persons Characters, with a View to their Admission to the sacred Office of the Ministry.

in their Temper, that 'tis difficult to form a satisfying Judgment about their Qualifications; and yet, upon prudent, tender and close Converses with them, that good Thing which is wrought in them, and the Religion which is more covertly practised by them, may be sufficiently discovered to give you a favourable Opinion of them, and to direct your Proceedings toward them in the forementioned Case: Or if, after all, you remain doubtful about them, it is best to wait; and if they really be corrupt in Principle or Practice, it can't easily be concealed for any Length of Time.

RECOLLECTIONS.

With what Veneration should the Aged, whether Men or Women; and with what Affability and Purity should younger People be cautioned against every sinful Infirmity! The Descendents of poor Widows ought to treat them with Respect, and provide as honourably for them, as they can. How unnatural, and how contrary to all the Principles of Christianity, and worse than Heathenish is it, for Gospel-Professors to neglect their destitute Parents, and their own Families! But if the Offspring of poor Widows are not able to maintain them, the Church, to which they belong, ought to take them under their Care: And if any Church needs good Matrons to attend their Sick and Poor, they may appoint such Widows of advanced Years to that Service, as have obtained a good Report, and shown a humble and compassionate Regard to the Saints and Servants of Christ; but young Widows ought not to be put into that Office, lest, giving themselves up to Pleasure, they become idle, tattling Busy-Bodies, which are the Pest of Society; and at length renounce their Profession of Faith, and, following the Devices of Satan, throw off religious Restraints, to their own Condemnation; they are indeed in the worst Sense dead, while they live: But as to poor *young* Widows of better Character, instead of their being burthensome to the Church, it may be advisable for them to marry believing Husbands, that are capable of maintaining them; and to bear and bring up such Children in the Fear of the Lord, as he may give them; as also to manage their Houshold Business with good Housewifry.——How solemn is the Charge to all Pastors, as well as Evangelists, in the Presence of God and Christ, and the holy Angels, that they faithfully declare these Things, and fulfil every Part of their Office! And though Reproofs and Censures are the most difficult and grievous Duties of their Station, yet they are to discharge them with Fidelity, and without Partiality, whether it be toward Church-Officers, or toward private Members. But with what Care and Caution should they proceed in Ordinations, lest they themselves share with the Ordained in their Guilt! And O what Prudence, Tenderness and Courage do they need for conducting, according to the Appearances of some People's *Sins* on one hand, and *good Deeds* on the other, which show themselves before, or after they pass Judgment upon them! How arduous, upon the Whole, is the Ministerial Work! And how ought they, that are eminently laborious, in preaching and supporting the pure Gospel of Christ, to be honour'd with great Respect, and liberal Maintenance, according to the Directions of both the Old and New Testament! And though they ought to be temperate in all Things, they need not confine themselves to drinking Water; but may lawfully use Wine with Moderation for Stomach's Sake, when their Labours and bodily Infirmities call for it, and it becomes needful for the Preservation of their Health, and Service in the Church.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

The Apostle lays down the Duty of Christians toward believing, as well as other Masters, which Timothy *ought to insist upon, with a severe Reproof to Judaizers that taught otherwise, 1—5. Shows the Advantage of Godliness with Contentment, and the Danger of covetous Pursuits after Riches, 6—10. Directs* Timothy *to a contrary Course, 11, 12. Gives him a solemn Charge to behave faithfully in a persevering Attention to his Orders, and in admonishing the Rich not to trust in their Riches, but in the living God, and to improve his Bounties to the best Purposes; and repeats his Charge with some Enlargement, closing all with a short, but comprehensive Benediction, 13,—21.*

TEXT.

1 LET *as many Servants as are under the Yoke, count their own Masters worthy of all Honour, that the Name of God, and* his *Doctrine be not blasphemed.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. AS there are some *Judaizers* that would make it unlawful for Bond-Slaves, upon their becoming Christians, to obey their Masters after the Flesh, * Let all converted Servants, even though they be under that Yoke of Servitude, think themselves in Conscience bound to pay all civil Respect and Obedience, that is due to their own Masters, whose Property they are; and to serve them faithfully, even tho' they be Heathens; by doing otherwise they would prejudice the Minds of their Masters against, and bring a Scandal upon the Name of the blessed God, whom they profess to own and honour as their God, and upon his glorious and holy Gospel, as if he had therein discharged them from the just Obligations, that they were under before, to perform the natural and civil Duties of their Stations; whereas his true Design in it is, to make them better Servants than ever, even to froward Masters. (1 *Peter*, ii. 18.)

2 *And they that have believing Masters, let them not despise* them, *because they are Brethren; but rather do* them *Service, because they are faithful and beloved, Partakers of the Benefit. These Things teach and exhort.*

2. And those Christian-Servants, that are so happy as to have believing and faithful Masters, ought to prize the Privilege, and not contemn them, or make too free with them, or think that they must be sunk, in their civil Capacities, down to a Level with themselves; and so withdraw their Service from them, because they are Brethren in Christ, and, as such, are upon a Level with themselves in religious Privileges, Honours and Enjoyments, and in God's Account: But let them, on the contrary, be the more cheerful, affectionate and diligent in doing the Business, and consulting the Interest of such Masters, for this Reason; because they are faithful Believers, beloved of God, and of

* As the Jewish *Rabbies* thought it unlawful for an *Israelite* to be sold for a Servant to Heathens, (See Dr. *Lightfoot*'s Heb. Talmud. Exercit. 1 *Cor*. vii. 23.) 'tis highly probable from *ver*. 3, of this Chapter, that some *Judaizers* insisted on the same for Christian-Converts: But as this would have been to break in upon the Civil Rights, Properties and Possessions, which Christianity leaves, as it found them: (See the Note on *Eph*. v. 21.) and would have been a strong Prejudice in the Minds of Heathens against embracing the Gospel, the Apostle takes Occasion to lay down the Duty of Christian-Slaves, and therein of all other believing Servants, to pay due Honour and Obedience to their Masters, whatsoever their religious Character be.

their

their Fellow-Christians, and are Partakers of the spiritual Blessings of the Gospel with themselves, as well as have a Right to the Benefit of their good and faithful Services. (ευεργεσιας) These are Things so important to the Credit of Religion, and the Preservation of natural Rights, that I wou'd have you publish and explain them, and excite to the Practice of them, on all proper Occasions.

3 *If any Man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome Words,* even *the Words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the Doctrine which is according to Godliness;*

3. If any one pretends to teach Notions contrary to this, or to whatsoever else I have been insisting on, (See *Chap.* i. 3, 10.) and don't embrace and submit to the Sound, uncorrupted and salutary Doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, concerning his Person and Offices, as it hath been delivered in his own Ministry, or by his inspired Servants, who, as such, preach his Word; (*Acts* xix. 20.) If any one don't give his Assent and Consent to the Gospel-Doctrine, which contains and enjoins, and is form'd, design'd and bless'd for promoting practical Religion, in all Devotion toward God, and in all relative Duties toward Men, on the Foot of his Authority, and with a good Conscience towards him;

4 *He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about Questions and Strifes of Words, whereof cometh Envy, Strife, Railings, evil Surmisings,*

5 *Perverse Disputings of Men of corrupt Minds, and destitute of the Truth, supposing that Gain is Godliness. From such withdraw thyself.*

4, 5. Such a Man, be his Pretences, Profession, or Station in the Church what they will, is a haughty, self-conceited Creature, (τετυφωται) puffed up with the Vanity of his own Mind, while he knows nothing aright of the Truth of the Gospel, or of what he ought to know, relating to God, and his own Duty; but, like a brain-sick Person, is foolishly and madly fond (νοσων) of dealing in impertinent, useless and entangling Questions, (*Chap.* i. 4.) and going into eager Disputes and vain Janglings about Words, rather than Things, in which he himself *neither understands what he says, nor whereof he affirms*; (*Chap.* i. 6, 7.) and which are fit for nothing but to kindle and inflame envious and invidious Thoughts and Passions; angry Debates; blasphemous Imputations (βλασφημιαι) and reviling Speeches; sinful, injurious and groundless Jealousies; preposterously curious, vain and froward Bickerings, (παραδιατριβαι) that are practised and delighted in only by Men, whose Minds have taken a perverse Turn under the Power of the reigning Corruptions of their own Hearts, and who are utter Strangers to Christ, and to the Truth of the Gospel, and the true Nature of vital Religion; vainly imagining, that what they get most by, for securing and advancing their secular Interest, is the best Scheme of Religion; and therefore they are for making a Trade of it, and modeling Christianity itself to their own Taste, in a Way that may be most subservient to their carnal Views. Have nothing to do with such perverse Men; reject their Principles, Practices and Conversation; and withdraw as far from them, as they have withdrawn from Truth and Holiness.

6 But Godliness with Contentment is great Gain.

6. But, whatever Men of such corrupt and worldly Spirits think of the Matter, True Religion in Heart and Life, which keeps up a solemn Veneration of God, and an Exercise of all suitable Graces in worshipping and serving him, through Jesus Christ, by the Assistance of his Spirit, according to the Gospel; this evangelical Godliness, together with an intire Satisfaction, that gives a Sufficiency to the Mind itself, (αὐταρκείας) with regard to such Things as we have, and to all Disposals of Providence relating to the present Life, is the best and truest, the most comfortable, advantageous and abiding Gain for this World and the next, incomparably preferable to all Affluence of Creature-Enjoyments, which at best are empty, precarious, and perishing.

7 For we brought nothing into this World, and it is *certain we can carry nothing out.*

7. For as we came naked into this World, bringing none of its good Things along with us, and hold what we have of them by the free Bounty and sovereign Disposals of God, who may give, or take them, as he pleases; so 'tis unquestionably certain, that we must go out of it naked, as leaving them all behind us, and carrying none of them away with us, when we come to die; (*Job.* i. 21.) and 'tis as certain that *Riches profit not in the Day of Wrath.* (Prov. xi. 4.)

8 And having Food and Raiment, let us be therewith content.

8. And if, while we are passing thro' this World, the good Providence of God supplies us with necessary Food to sustain us, and Cloaths and Habitations (σκεπάσματα) to cover us, we ought not to be greedily and ambitiously aspiring after more; but should be thankful for such Mercies as we are favoured with, and so well pleased with them, as to think we have enough.

9 But they that will be rich, fall into Temptation, and a Snare, and into *many foolish and hurtful Lusts, which drown Men in Destruction and Perdition.*

9. But they whose Hearts are set upon Riches, and resolve, if possible, to get them at any Rate, as tho' they were their chief Good, plunge themselves into the most dangerous Temptations to unlawful Ways of obtaining, and of using them; and into a dreadful Snare to their own Souls, which Satan and their carnal Hearts lay for them; and into the deep Defilement of manyfoolishly inconsiderate, mad and pernicious Appetites and Passions, which they ought to be ashamed and afraid of; and which, like a great Gulf, swallow up such worldly minded Men in both temporal and eternal Destruction.

10 For the Love of Money is the Root of all Evil: Which while some coveted af-

10. For an inordinate Value and Affection for Wealth is a pregnant Source of all sinful, injurious and miserable Principles and Practices; * which is sadly exemplified in some, who, through unsatiable Desires after the Things of this

* Gold begets in Brethren Hate,
Gold in Families Debate;
Gold does Friendship separate,
Gold does Civil Wars create.
Cowley's Works, 8vo. Vol. I. Page 54.

World,

ter, they have erred from the Faith, and pierced themselves thro' with many Sorrows.

World, have run astray from the Truth of the Gospel, and their Profession of it; and, instead of finding the Pleasure and Advantage they proposed to themselves thereby, they bring Distress and Ruin upon themselves in Soul and Body, with as painful Agony, in after Reflections upon it, as if they had pierced themselves through with many sharp and poisonous Darts.

11 *But thou, O Man of God, flee these Things; and follow after Righteousness, Godliness, Faith, Love, Patience, Meekness.*

11. But as for you, O Timothy, who are a Man highly favour'd of God in the Gifts and Graces of his Spirit, set apart and devoted, by your own Consent, to his Service in the Work of the Ministry, Flee to the remotest Distance with utter Abhorrence, and with all your Might, from these corrupt Principles, Dispositions and Practices, and every Thing of this evil Nature and mischievous Tendency, as inconsistent with the Dignity of your Office, and your own Happiness and Usefulness; and, in Opposition thereto, pursue vigorously, in the Strength of divine Grace, the richest Attainments of the Knowledge, Experience and Exercise of Righteousness, in all your Behaviour toward Men; of strict and evangelical Piety, in all your Actings toward God; of Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and in God through him, and of realizing Views of the heavenly Glory; of Love to Christ, to the Truth, and to his People for his Sake; and, under the Power of these, possess your own Soul in Patience, amidst all Wants and Troubles of this World, and Sufferings for the Gospel-Sake, and in an humble, gentle Temper towards all Men, (*Titus* iii. 2.) *in Meekness instructing those that oppose themselves*, (2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.) as far is consistent with being valiant for the Truth, which must not be given up through Cowardice, or on any Terms whatsoever.

12 *Fight the good Fight of Faith, lay hold on eternal Life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good Profession before many Witnesses.*

12. In this Manner then, *contend* earnestly for the Faith, which was *once delivered to the Saints*; (Jude, *ver.* 3.) Stretch yourself out with holy Vehemence and Eagerness, (ἀγωνίζου) as *a good Soldier of Jesus Christ*, (2 Tim. ii. 3.) in this good Fight against the Flesh, the Devil and the World, for a good Master, and in a good Cause, which will have a good Issue, as engaged in with an Exercise of Faith to derive Strength from him for it, to support and animate you in it, to carry you through it, and bring you off with Victory: Press therefore towards the Mark for the Prize, till, in a Way of believing, and of all Fidelity, you actually get Possession of eternal Life; unto the obtaining of which you are called by Divine Grace, and which is set before you in the Gospel for your Encouragement under all the Hardships of your present Warfare; (See the Note on *Phil.* iii. 12.) in your Entrance on which, at your Ordination, you made a noble Confession of your Faith in the Presence of many Witnesses, who attended that Solemnity; and you have ever since bore an honourable Testimony to it, by preaching and

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Conversation, and by all the Sufferings you have patiently endured for it, in the View of numerous Spectators (1 *Cor.* iv. 9.)

13 *I give thee Charge in the Sight of God, who quickeneth all Things, and* before *Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good Confession;*

13. Now, with an Eye to the greatest of all Witnesses, of whom it most highly concerns us to be approved, I solemnly charge you in the Name, and as it were before the Face of the All-seeing and Almighty God, who is the Author of every Kind of Life; who raises dead Souls to spiritual Life, and revives them afterwards under all their Decays, is the Life of all our Ministrations, and will raise the dead Bodies of all his faithful Servants and Saints to immortal Life and Glory: I also charge you, as in the Sight and Presence of Jesus, the great Messiah, as you will answer it to him in the Day of Judgment, who, when he was arraigned, as an Impostor, at the Bar of *Pontius Pilate*, the *Roman* Governor, bore a free and open Testimony to the Truth of his own Character, (*Mat.* xxvii. 11, and *John* xviii 37) though he knew it would cost him his Life; and so hath set you a noble Example of Courage and Stedfastness in continuing to maintain the Truth of the Gospel concerning him, even unto Death:

14 *That thou keep* this *Commandment without Spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:*

14. 'Tis in the Presence of these divine Persons, that I give you this solemn Charge to hold fast the ministerial Trust committed to you by their Command, and to follow the Instructions I have given you by their Authority, for executing it with all Integrity, Care and Diligence, and in all respects free from Blame, *studying to shew yourself approved unto God, a Workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth*; (2 Tim. ii. 15) and persevering therein to the End of Life, in full Expectation and Hope of the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, till he shall come *to judge the Quick and Dead* at the last Day. (2 *Tim.* iv. 1.)

15 *Which in his Times he shall shew,* who is *the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords;*

15. Which Appearance for this great Purpose, he will demonstrate, in its proper and appointed Season *, who, in Opposition to all other Gods, and all created Beings, is blessed for ever in the Enjoyment of himself, and is the only supreme and omnipotent Ruler over all Kings and Lords, and infinitely more excellent and glorious than any of them; they, and all that they are and have, being in-

* Some understand this as meant of *God the Father*, and others of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, because he is the next Antecedent; accordingly they refer *in his Times* to the Season of his glorious appearing, when he will most illustriously demonstrate himself to be, what he witnessed concerning himself before *Pontius Pilate*: And 'tis certain that *King of Kings and Lord of Lords* is a Title given to *Christ*, *Rev.* xvii. 14, and xix. 16; but I don't find that 'tis any where, unless here, given to *the Father*. However, it remains doubtful by the Connection, whether this and the three following Verses are to be referred to God the Father, or to our Lord Jesus Christ; but, which-ever Way it be consider'd, the *Doxology*, *ver.* 16 to one of these Persons, is not to the Exclusion of the other; since the like is offered to *the Father*, *Phil.* iv. 20, to *the Son*, *Rev.* i. 5, 6, and conjunctly and equally to *both*, *Rev.* v. 13. (See the Note on *Chap.* i. 17.)

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tirely dependent on his Will and Pleasure, and under his Controul, *by whom Kings reign, and Princes decree Justice.* (Prov. viii. 15.)

16 Who only hath Immortality, dwelling in the Light which no Man can approach unto; whom no Man hath seen, nor can see: To whom be *Honour and Power everlasting. Amen.*

16. Who only has an unbeginning and never-ending Life of perfect Blessedness and Glory, originally, necessarily, unchangeably and independently in himself; and dwells in such an illustrious *Shechina* in the Heaven of Heavens, as no mortal Man can have Access to; whom no Man, in this State of Imperfection and Frailty, has ever seen, or can see in his full Blaze of Glory, and live; *(Ex.* xxxiii. 20) nor can any corporal Eye ever behold him in his divine Nature, in which he is a purely spiritual Being: To whom be ascribed all Honour, Might and Dominion, with cheerful and profound Adoration, as is most due, for ever and ever, *Amen.*

17 Charge them that are rich in this World, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain Riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all Things to enjoy;

17. In this View of Things, and in Reflection on the important Trust thus solemnly committed to you, Give faithful Admonitions, in the Name of Christ, to those that abound in the Riches of this World, to watch and pray, and take the utmost Care, that they be not lifted up with Pride, Self-sufficiency, and Contempt of others, on that Account; nor set their Hearts upon, or place their Confidence in, their earthly Possessions, which are all precarious and fleeting, and, when least expected, may *make themselves Wings, and flee away:* (Prov. xxiii. 5.) But teach them to put their intire Trust in the only living and true God, who daily loads us with his Benefits, and who, in the Riches of his Mercy and Goodness, gives us every Thing for Necessity, and many Things for Delight, yea, all Things that we enjoy for present Support and Comfort, *pertaining to Life and Godliness, through the Knowledge of him that has called us to Glory and Virtue.* (2 Pet. i. 3.)

18 That they do good, that they be rich in good Works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

18. Charge them also, as they will answer it at the Great Day of Account, that, instead of abusing their Riches, and mis-spending them lavishly upon themselves, they do all the Good they can with them; that they abound in better Riches to their own and others Advantage, even in every good Work, which their Affluence obliges them to, and makes them capable of; that they be cheerfully disposed of their own accord, on all proper Occasions, to give liberally for promoting every good Cause, and to be generous in communicating to the Necessities of the Poor, *especially of the Houshold of Faith.* (Gal. vi. 10.)

19 Laying up in store for themselves a good Foundation against the Time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal Life.

19. And let them know that they will heap up the best and most substantial of all Treasures, to their own Use and Benefit, by their humble Trust in God through Christ, the Sincerity of which is proved by its Fruitfulness unto all good Works; *(ver.* 17, 18) and which, in Opposition to uncertain Riches, rests on a sure Foundation of Hope and Happiness for the World to come, that, when they enter into it, they may actually lay hold on, and take Possession

of Eternal Life, as the Gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, (*Rom.* vi. 23. See the Note there) and as the Crown of Life, which they shall receive at the End of their Course, like the Runners in the *Grecian* Games, who, upon finishing their Race, lay hold on the Garland, that is placed at the Goal. (See the Note on *Phil.* iii. 12.)

20 *O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy Trust, avoiding profane* and *vain Bablings, and Oppositions of Science falsely so called:*

20. O my dear *Timothy*, Think seriously of these Things; and, in Consideration of their vast Importance, Take special Care to preserve the Doctrines and Ordinances of the Gospel pure and uncorrupted, and to exercise all your spiritual Gifts in fulfilling your Ministry, according to these Directions; all which are committed to you by the Lord Jesus Christ, as a sacred Trust to be faithfully managed for him, and given an Account of to him: And, that you may do this to the best Advantage, keep yourself clear of, and utterly reject the impious, trifling, empty and noisy Talk of the Judaizing Teachers, and their Oppositions to the true Doctrine of Christ, by their corrupt Notions of the Law, which I have been cautioning you against; but which they falsely call Knowledge, though they neither know what they say, nor whereof they affirm. (*Chap.* i. 4—7.)

21 *Which some professing, have erred concerning the Faith. Grace* be *with thee. Amen.*

21. And so pernicious, as well as empty and vain, is their pretended Knowledge, that some among them, who have been mighty fond of it, and prided themselves in it, have by that means run off from the Faith of the Gospel into gross Errors. That you may be kept steady in the only true Faith, and be abundantly assisted and succeeded in maintaining and promoting it, to the Glory of God, and the Salvation of your own and many others Souls, May the Divine Love and Favour ever attend and prosper you in your Way and Work, and thoroughly season your Heart with every Grace of the Spirit, *Amen.* So let it be, and so I trust it will be.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What an Honour and Encouragement is it to believing Servants, even of the lowest Rank, that they are Brethren in Christ, Partakers of all spiritual Blessings, equally with Christians of the highest civil Stations! But what a Reproach is it to the Name of their God, and to his Gospel, for them to be so conceited on this Account, as to think themselves above paying the Duty they owe to their earthly Masters, even though they be Infidels; or to be less, and not rather more, respectful and diligent in the Service of religious Masters, because they are Brethren in the Fellowship of the Gospel! These Things are to be taught and learn'd; and whosoever, under false Pretences to Knowledge, suggest Sentiments contrary to these, or to any other Doctrine of Christ, which is a Doctrine according to Godliness, they are to be rejected, as Persons, that are proud and ignorant, perverse and destitute of the Truth, fond of vain Opinions, and Disputations about Words, which tend to Strife and Envy, Railing and unwarrantable Suspicions, and that make a Trade of Religion to serve their secular Interests: But true Godliness, with a satisfied Mind as to worldly Circumstances, though we have only necessary Food and Raiment, is the best of all Gain; and therefore is to be cultivated in earnest Pursuits after Righteousness, Goodness, Faith, Love, Patience and Meekness. And, alas! What is this poor empty World, that we should set our Hearts upon it! We brought none of its Enjoyments into it, and whatsoever we have of them here, we must certainly,

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e'er long, leave them all behind us: And they that will seek to be rich, right or wrong, throw themselves into many dangerous Temptations, and foolish ensnaring Lusts and Passions, that will one Time or other recoil upon them, and pierce them through with many agonizing Sorrows; will make them err from the Faith of the Gospel; and plunge them into deep and endless Ruin: For the Love of Money is the Root of these, and numberless other sinful and destructive Evils. How needful then is it, to warn the Rich of this World to be humble amidst all their Affluence; and not place their Confidence in uncertain Wealth, but in God, through Christ, who is a free and bountiful Giver of all Things relating to this Life, and that which is to come! And how ready should they be to prove the Sincerity of the Profession of their Faith, and Trust in the Lord, by its genuine Fruits in every good and charitable Work; which will be laying in a good Stock of solid Happiness for the World to come, that, at the End of their Christian-Course, they may receive the Crown of Life! O how conscientious and laborious should the Servants of Christ be, in discharging every Part of the ministerial Trust, that is committed to them; in maintaining the good Profession they have made various Ways before many Witnesses; and in fighting the good Fight of Faith, till they lay hold on Eternal Life, at the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ! And how mindful should they always be of the solemn Bonds, that are laid upon them, to adhere with Fidelity to divine Directions, as in the Presence of God the Father, and of Jesus Christ! He couragiously owned himself to be the true Messiah, before *Pontius Pilate*, and, at his second coming, will be gloriously manifested to be so, by the only living and life-giving God; who is the supreme almighty Governor, above all other Kings and Lords; who only has Immortality essentially in himself, dwells in Glory inaccessible to frail Mortals, and is invisible in his own Being: To whom be ascribed everlasting Honour, Dominion and Power, *Amen*. May all that love him unite in Prayer for his Ministring Servants, that his free Favour, in all its Manifestations and Effects, may perpetually enable them to be diligent and faithful in his Work! *Amen*.

A PRAC-

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF THE *Second* Epiſtle of the Apoſtle PAUL to *TIMOTHY*.

In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The Preface to the *Second* Epiſtle to *TIMOTHY*.

THIS Epiſtle is generally, and moſt probably, ſuppos'd from *Chap.* iv. 6, and ſeveral other Paſſages, to be the laſt that the Apoſtle wrote under his ſecond Confinement at *Rome*, a little before his Martyrdom there. It contains ſome further Directions to *Timothy*, with a ſomewhat more immediate Reference, than the former, (which is thought to have been wrote about nine Years before) to his own *Perſonal* Conduct, in the Diſcharge of his Office, as an Evangeliſt.

The Apoſtle introduces it with the ſame Salutation, and like affectionate Expreſſions to him, and Concern for him, as before; and with the like Aſſertions of his Character, as an Apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt, for *Timothy*'s Encouragement, and for countenancing him againſt all the Cavils of the *Judaizers*, that would oppoſe him in fulfilling his Truſt, according to this and his former Inſtructions: And to animate him the more in his Work, and fortify him againſt the Fear and Shame of Sufferings on Account of his Faithfulneſs therein, he ſets before him the eternal Salvation, and the Diſcoveries of immortal Life, that Chriſt has brought in by the Goſpel, together with his own Cheerfulneſs and undaunted Courage, under his extreme Sufferings for its Sake; to which he adds grateful Reflections on the Behaviour of *Oneſiphorus*, who had own'd him, and had been a Comfort to him, while others deſerted him, *Chap.* i. He thereupon exhorts *Timothy* to keep up a conſtant and intire Dependence on the Grace of Chriſt; and, in its Strength, to acquit himſelf with Fidelity, in the Diſcharge of his Office; in bravely enduring all Hardſhips

Hardships and Distresses for Christ, after the Apostle's own Example; in representing the Importance, as well as the Truth of the Things he was to preach to others; as also in living the Doctrines he preached, and supporting them, with a becoming Spirit, against the ungodly Principles and Practices of those that would subvert them, *Chap.* ii. He then forewarns him of a particular Sort of corrupt Professors and Preachers, whom he describes, and, in Opposition to whom, he reminds *Timothy* of his own Doctrine, Manner of Life, and Behaviour under various Persecutions; and enforces a stedfast Adherence to divine Revelation, whatever it might cost him, *Chap.* iii. He likewise gives him a solemn Charge to fulfil his Ministry, with the utmost Care and Diligence, in Consideration of the Apostacies, that would appear among many professing Christians, and of his having no further Assistance from himself, who was going to seal his Testimony with his Blood, which he thought of with Joy and Triumph, as the Crown of all his Labours and Sufferings: And concludes with Expressions of earnest Desire to see *Timothy*, as soon as possible; with an Account of the different Circumstances and Behaviour of several Persons whom he names; and with Salutations, and his usual Benediction, *Chap.* iv.

CHAP. I.

Paul *asserts his Apostolic Character, salutes* Timothy, *and expresses his great Affection to him in Remembrance of his sympathizing Tears and unfeigned Faith,* 1—5. *Exhorts him to a diligent Improvement of his spiritual Gifts, without Fear or Shame on account of Sufferings for Christ, who has brought Life and Immortality to Light by the Gospel; and to hold fast that blessed Doctrine, which was committed to him,* 6—14. *And tells him of many that had basely deserted him, but speaks with Honour and Affection of* Onesiphorus, *for his Kindness to him,* 15—18.

TEXT.

1 PAUL *an Apostle of Jesus Christ, by the Will of God, according to the Promise of Life, which is in Christ Jesus,*

PARAPHRASE.

1. PAUL, who is called and qualified to be an Apostle of Jesus Christ, by the free and sovereign Appointment and Commission of God the Father, to bear Witness to the once crucified, but now risen and exalted Saviour, and to preach him among *Jews*, and especially *Gentiles*, according to the Promise of eternal Life, which *was given in Christ before the World began,* (Tit. i. 2) and in due Time was made to *Abraham* and his spiritual Seed, as to be fulfilled in him, *in whom all Nations were to be blessed*; (Gen. xxii. 18) which Life is reposited in him, purchased and dispensed by him, and obtained through Faith in him. (1 *John* v. 11, 12.)

2 *To Timothy,* my *dearly beloved Son: Grace, Mercy,* and *Peace from God the Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord.*

2. Even I *Paul* send greeting to you, my dearly beloved Son *Timothy*. (See the Note 1 *Tim.* i. 2.) May the free Favour and tender Compassion, with all their happy Manifestations, Fruits and Effects, (See the Note on *Rom.* i. 7) and all Manner of Prosperity for Soul and Body, Time and Eternity, abound toward you from God the Father, as the first Mover in our Salvation, and from Jesus Christ, your Lord and mine, as concurring with him therein, and as the Purchaser and Giver of all Blessings, in the Execution of his mediatorial Office.

3 *I thank God, whom I serve from* my *Forefathers with pure Conscience, that without ceasing I have Remembrance of thee in my Prayers Night and Day;*

3. I heartily render Thanks and Praise to God, whom I religiously worship and adore after the Manner of my Progenitors, even the only true God, whom *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, and all my pious Ancestors served; and this I now do with a Heart purified by Faith, and a Conscience purged from dead Works by the Blood of Christ. (*Acts* xv. 9, and *Heb.* ix. 14.) I bless his holy Name, that, though in the Days of my *Judaism*, I was dreadfully misguided by corrupt Passions and Prejudices, I now in Love to him, and to you his faithful Servant, am continually mindful and make Mention of you, as in all solemn Addresses to

the Throne of Grace *, so particularly in my Morning and Evening Prayers, which I constantly offer up every Day, as the *Jews* were wont to do at the Time of their Morning and Evening Sacrifice, and as is an incumbent Duty for all Christians to practise Day by Day, as their reasonable Service.

4 Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy Tears, that I may be filled with Joy:

4. And so ardent is my Affection to you, that (if it be the Will of God) I am exceedingly desirous of seeing you, once more, before my Death, which is now at hand, (*Chap.* iv. 6) that I may have the Pleasure of your Company, and an Opportunity of leaving with you some farther Instructions, as Occasions may require, and as the dying Charge of a tender Parent to his most beloved Son. And there are two Things, among others, that so greatly endear you to me, and would fill me with the more abundant Joy in seeing you again; One is the touching Reflection I make upon the affectionate, filial and moving Flood of Tears †, which you poured out at our last Parting, on Account of the Danger I was like to be exposed to, and which made a deep Impression on my Soul then, and, at Times, ever since.

5 When I call to Remembrance the unfeigned Faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy Grandmother Lois, and thy Mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

5. The other Thing, that thus engages my Heart to you, is, the lively Sense I retain of that sincere Faith, which you have manifested on all Occasions to be in you, without the least Appearance of Hypocrisy, or Disguise; (ἀνυποκρίτυ) even that same Sort of Faith, which was not only professed by, but discovered itself to be seated, as an active and abiding Principle, in the Heart, first of your pious Grandmother *Lois*, as also in your no less truly religious Mother *Eunice*, who believed in the promised Messiah, and afterwards embraced him upon the Gospel-Revelation of him; and I am fully satisfied from what I have seen and known of you, that the like undissembled Faith is planted also in your own Heart; and so God's Covenant with Believers and their Seed is remarkably fulfilled in your Mother and you.

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* *Prayers Night and Day* seems most immediately to relate to the Morning and Evening Prayers, which used to be offered up by the *Jews* at the Time of their Morning and Evening Sacrifice, *Exod.* xxix. 38, 39, compared with *Luke* i. 10: And these are undoubtedly proper Seasons of stated solemn Addresses to God with Thanksgivings for the Mercies of the Night, or of the Day past, and with humble Supplications, and Commitments of ourselves and all our own and others Concerns to the Lord, for the Mercies of the Day, or of the Night, that is coming on. And yet they are not to be restrained to these stated Seasons; but are likewise to be presented to God on all suitable Occasions, and especially in important Circumstances and Turns of Life, relating to spiritual and temporal Things. (See Dr. *Whitby*'s Note on 1 *Thess.* v. 17.)

† These *Tears* were manifestly those, which *Timothy* shed at the Apostle's last parting with him; and 'tis thought by many, that he refers to that melting Leave, which the *Ephesian* Elders took of the Apostle, *Acts* xx. 37, 38, among whom *Timothy* is supposed to have been present, and wept most abundantly: But as 'tis uncertain whether he were in that Company, or not; and as that seems to have been about nine or ten Years before the writing of this Epistle, the Apostle had probably, seen him since that Time; and therefore the Parting, here referred to, was in all Likelihood on some later Occasion; though the History of *the Acts*, which is supposed to have ended six or seven Years before this Epistle was wrote, gives us no Account of it.

6 Wherefore I put thee in Remembrance, that thou stir up the Gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my Hands.

6. Therefore in my great Affection to you, and in Consideration of the extraordinary Favour, which God has still further shown in most eminently fitting you for ministerial Service, I now write to you again to remind you of my former Exhortation, that you may not be remiss in cherishing and improving the spiritual Gifts, which he has freely bestowed upon you, and which still remain in you; but, like one that would blow up Live-Coals, when cover'd with Ashes, into a Flame, may (ἀναζωπυρεῖν) by diligent Meditation, Reading and Prayer, stir up and kindle those Gifts into a sacred Fervor and Activity, which God has remarkably honoured you with, by means of the Imposition of my own and others Hands, as the Signal of his conveying them to you, at your Ordination. (See the Paraphrase on 1 *Tim.* iv. 14.)

7 For God hath not given us the Spirit of Fear, but of Power, and of Love, and of a sound Mind.

7. You ought by no means to be discouraged in the Exercise of those Gifts, on account of the Opposition of your Adversaries: For the Temper and Disposition, which God by his Spirit has formed in us, whom he hath called and fitted for holy Ministrations, is not a Spirit of Cowardice and Dread of our Enemies, whether Men or Devils; but is a Spirit of holy Fortitude and undaunted Courage to encounter all Difficulties and Dangers; and of fervent Love to Christ and his Cause, and to immortal Souls; and of Sobriety and good Judgment, (σωφρονισμοῦ) in a due Government of our Passions, and in stedfastly adhering to, and patiently suffering for, the true Gospel of Christ.

8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the Testimony of our Lord, nor of me his Prisoner: But be thou Partaker of the Afflictions of the Gospel, according to the Power of God;

8. Let therefore such Considerations as these carry you above all Shame, Discouragement or Faint-heartedness in bearing a noble and open Testimony to our blessed Lord and Saviour, and to his Gospel, in which he gives Testimony unto himself, as he is its principal Subject, and which he owns with the Power of his Spirit; and let the same Thoughts fortify you against being ashamed to own, vindicate and visit me in my Bonds, as his Apostle and Prisoner: But let them, on the contrary, animate you to sympathize with me in my Persecutions, and to be ready to endure the same yourself with all Cheerfulness for the Gospel's Sake, in humble Dependence upon the mighty Assistance, which God by his Spirit will give you, to strengthen and enable you to suffer patiently, on account of your firm Attachment to it. And well may we cheerfully submit to all Tribulations, Dangers and Reproaches for the Honour and Glory of God;

9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy Calling, not according to our Works, but according to his own Purpose and Grace, which was

9. Who has provided a Saviour for us, and given us to him to take care that we might not be cut off in our Sins, and *has appointed us to obtain Salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ*, (1 Thess. v. 9) who has already purchased it for us; and in Consequence of all this, God has effectually called us, by the Gospel, to Holiness here, in order to our being fitted for, and brought to the Possession of perfect Happiness

given us in Christ Jesus, before the World began;

ness for ever hereafter: (2 *Theſſ.* ii. 13, 14.) All which he has done, not as influenced to it by any Foresight of our good Works, as though we should ever deserve it; but intirely of his free Favour, according to his own sovereign Intention and Resolution, and the mere unmerited Kindness of his own gracious Heart, which was set upon us, and had a special Regard to us, in Christ our Head, from all Eternity, before the Foundation of the World, (*Epheſ.* i. 4) and which began to dawn in the first Promise, (*Gen.* iii. 17) before the *Jewish* Ages *.

10 *But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished Death, and hath brought Life and Immortality to Light through the Gospel:*

10. But which gracious Purpose, that lay from all Eternity as a Secret in his own Bosom, and was afterwards, in great measure concealed under the Types and Shadows of the Old Testament, is now evidently discovered, with illustrious Brightness, by the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whose Appearance in Flesh and in the Execution of his mediatorial Office, has, like that of the rising Sun, (επιφανεις) scattered *Jewish* and *Heathen*-Darkness; who in Virtue of his dying for our Sins, in our Nature and in our Stead, and of his rising, as a Conqueror, from the Grave, has taken away the Sting of Death, broke its Power, and turned it into a Blessing, instead of a Curse to them that believe in him, and delivered them from eternal Death; (1 *Cor.* xv. 55, 56, 57) and who has made a plain Revelation of a blessed Life, and immortal Glory of Soul and Body in the heavenly World, by means of the Gospel, which shows us the Certainty, together with the sublime, excellent and spiritual Nature of that State, and our Way of arriving at it through him.

11 *Whereunto I am appointed a Preacher, and an Apostle, and a Teacher of the Gentiles.*

11. This is a blessed and glorious Gospel indeed, for the Dispensation of which I, like a Herald sent to proclaim Peace by Jesus Christ, am appointed and constituted an authentic Publisher, (κηρυξ) and an Apostle, to bear Witness to a crucified and risen Saviour, by immediate Commission from him, and *that* with a particular Relation to the *Gentiles*, (Acts ix. 15) as a Preacher to them, that they may hear and believe the glad Tidings of eternal Life to the saving of their Souls.

12 *For the which Cause I also suffer these Things: Nevertheless, I am not a-*

12. And 'tis for my Faithfulness and Zeal in discharging this Office, and *that* particularly to them, that I now actually suffer all the Disgrace and Severities of my present Imprisonment, and am daily expecting Martyrdom itself: But,

* I have taken in the Notion, which Mr. *Locke* and others have given of the Words *before the World began*, as signifying *before the secular Ages of the Jews.* (προ χρονων αιωνιων) But as the Purpose of God was certainly from Eternity, and the Word (αιων) often signifies *the World*, and is used plurally, as for Ages, so far *the Worlds*; (Heb. i. 2) and as the Phrase (απ' αιωνος) evidently signifies from the *Beginning of the World*, or *from the Beginning of Time*, Luke i. 70, and *Acts* iii. 21; Why should not the like Phrase (προ χρονων αιωνιων) signify also *before the Beginning of the World*, or *of all Time or Ages*, and be in Sense the same with *before the Foundation of the World*, as *that* is often used to signify *from all Eternity*?

ſhamed: For I know whom I have believed, and I am perſuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him againſt that Day.

in Conſideration of the glorious Excellency of this Cauſe, I am ſo far from being aſhamed of Chriſt and his Goſpel, or of my Sufferings for them, that I glory in them; and have the moſt joyful Expectation of a happy Iſſue of all in a better World: For I well know, in the Light of God's Word and Spirit, and upon long Trial and Experience, what a gracious, all-ſufficient, faithful and divine Saviour he is, whom I have received and rely'd upon by Faith; and I am fully ſatisfied, on the ſureſt Grounds, that he has all Power and Authority in his Office-Capacity, which includes his Will, to ſecure my Soul, with all its eternal Concerns, that I have intruſted him with, as my moſt important *Depoſitum*, to take care of † againſt the Day of the final Judgment, which may be emphatically called *that Day*, as 'tis the concluding Day at the End of Time, and the Day, in which every one will be more concerned than in any other Day whatſoever, as his Condition, for Happineſs, or Miſery, will then be ſolemnly, publickly and unalterably decided for Eternity.

13 *Hold faſt the Form of ſound Words, which thou haſt heard of me, in Faith and Love, which is in Chriſt Jeſus.*

13. Whatever Trials therefore you meet with, as may be expected in the Cauſe of Chriſt; See to it that, encouraged by my Example of Faith, Patience and Hope in Sufferings, you keep in Memory, ſtedfaſtly adhere to, and reſolutely maintain (υποτυπωσιν υγιαινοντων λογων) the Pattern, or Platform of the uncorrupted, wholeſome, nouriſhing and healing Doctrine of the Goſpel, that is contained in thoſe Words of Truth and Soberneſs, which you have been taught by me, in Converſation, Preaching and Writing,

† *That which I have committed to him againſt that Day* is underſtood by ſome to mean *the Goſpel-Doctrine*, and by others the *Church of Chriſt*, which was committed to the Apoſtle's Truſt. But, how great and important a Truth ſoever there be in either of theſe Sentiments, they don't ſeem fully to agree with the Apoſtle's Deſign in this Place, nor with the Form of Expreſſion here uſed: For he propoſes this, as an Encouragement to *Timothy*, not to be *aſhamed of the Teſtimony of our Lord, nor of his Priſoner*, but to ſubmit cheerfully to Sufferings for Chriſt and the Goſpel's Sake, *ver.* 8: And a Conſideration of the bleſſed Advantage, that he ſhould have from Chriſt at the Great Day, was much more proper to inforce this, than a Conſideration, that Chriſt would take care of his own Church and Cauſe, whether *Timothy* laboured in it, or ſuffered for it, or not: And the Apoſtle calls it *his own Depoſitum*, (την παραθηκην μου) which he committed to Chriſt, that he might receive it again with Safety; but *the Goſpel* and *the Church of Chriſt* are not the Property of, nor are to be given back again to, any Miniſter or Apoſtle as his *own*. The *Noun*, (παραθηκη) here uſed, occurs no where elſe in the New Teſtament; but the *Verb* (παρατιθημι) is ſeveral Times uſed for committing *Perſons* to God, as in *Acts* xiv 23, and xx. 32; and the Apoſtle's Act of Faith here, amidſt Troubles and Dangers, and near Proſpects of Death and Eternity, was like that, which our Lord himſelf exerciſed towards his Father, in his expiring Moments, ſaying, (*Luke* xxiii. 46) *Father, into thine Hand I commend* (παραθησομαι) *my Spirit*; and was ſuch an Act of Faith, as the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks of, (1 *Epiſt.* iv. 19) *Let them that ſuffer according to the Will of God commit* (παρατιθεσθωσαν) *the keeping of their Souls to him in well-doing, as to a faithful Creator.* This Commitment of the Soul to Chriſt *againſt that Day*, evidently means againſt the Day of Judgment, when the Life and Immortality, which the Apoſtle had been ſpeaking of, *ver.* 10, ſhall be enjoy'd in all Perfection and Glory, which will be at the Day of Chriſt's ſecond appearing, *Col.* iii. 4, and *Heb.* ix. 28. This is the Day that the Apoſtle had in View, and refers to again and again, in this Epiſtle, under Apprehenſions of the near Approach of Death, as in *ver.* 18, and *Chap.* ii. 10, 11, 12, and iv. 1, 8, 18. This is ſometimes called, by way of Emphaſis, *the Day of Chriſt* (Phil. i. 6, 10) *the Day*, (1 Cor. iii. 13) and *that Day* here, and in ſeveral other Places, and *the Great Day*, (Jude, *ver.* 6) and *the Day of Judgment* very often.

with

with respect to Faith in Christ, and Love to him and to all Fellow-Christians for his Sake; * and which you received, with a firm Persuasion of their Truth and Reality, as *faithful Sayings*, and embraced with cordial Affection, as *worthy of all Acceptation*; which you are also to preach with Fidelity and Love, as wrought and excited in you toward Jesus, the anointed Head and Saviour of the Church, and by super-natural Influence from him.

14 *That good Thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.*

14. As to that momentous Trust and Treasure, inclusive of your spiritual Gifts, and of the Doctrine of the Gospel, and your Office as a Minister to preach it, which is excellent in itself, and good for the Use of edifying your own and others Souls, to the Glory of God and their Salvation, and was committed by the Lord Jesus Christ to you at your solemn Ordination; See that you be faithful in maintaining it against all the Efforts of your Enemies, and in preserving it pure and uncorrupted, with religious Care and Diligence, by the Assistance of the Holy Spirit, who permanently resides with peculiar Relation and Influence, and by his Gifts and Graces, in you and me, as he ever does, according to the Measure of the Gift of Christ, (*Eph.* iv. 7) in all true Believers and faithful Ministers, (*John* xiv. 16, 17.) to enable us to fulfil the Duties of our Stations, in the Face of all Opposition and Danger.

15 *This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.*

15. You ought to be the rather excited to all Faithfulness and Diligence in these Things, as you can't but know, that the Generality of the *Asiatic* Professors of Christ's Name † have shamefully deserted me in my present Sufferings for his Sake, as being afraid, or ashamed to own and stand by me in them: Of this Sort *Phygellus* and *Hermogenes* are notorious Instances.

16 *The Lord give Mercy unto the House of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my Chain.*

16. However, in this Time of so great Defection, I have not been left utterly destitute of Friends, for whom I heartily bless God, and implore his Blessing; as particularly my earnest Desire and Prayer is, that the Lord, who *with the Merciful will show himself merciful*, (Pf. xviii. 25.) would multiply Mercies of every Kind, temporal, spiritual and eternal, upon the Family of *Onesiphorus*, § in return for the Mercy he hath shown to me: For, notwithstanding the Cowardice of pretended Friends, and the Fury of open Ene-

* *Faith and Love* may relate either to *the Doctrines* received, or to *the Manner* of *Timothy*'s receiving and preaching them.

† *They which are in Asia* are supposed by some to mean, such as lived in *Asia*, and by others, such as were Natives of *Asia*, but at this Time were at *Rome*; the last of which seems most probable to me, but the Paraphrase has left it undetermined.

§ It seems from *ver.* 18, compared with *Chap.* iv. 19. that *Onesiphorus* was an Inhabitant of *Ephesus*, as the Place of his usual Abode, where his Family dwelt, but from which he was now absent, being very probably still at *Rome*, for which Reason his Family, without mentioning him, is spoken of here, and saluted, *Chap.* iv. 17: But I can see no Force in what *Grotius* and *Estius* offer for their Supposition that he *was dead*: All that the Apostle says about him has a contrary Aspect; and therefore *Estius*'s Conclusion from hence, that Prayers are to be offered for departed Saints, is built upon a mere Conjecture without any solid Foundation. (See *Hammond*'s Note on the Place.)

mies,

mies, he, with a truly Christian-Courage and Compassion, has often relieved and comforted me in my Distress, (ἀνέψυξε) by seasonable Visits and Supplies of Things convenient for me, which have been like a cooling Breeze to refresh me in the Heat of my Tribulations; and so great was his Affection to me, and to the glorious Cause for which I suffer, that he was not ashamed to own me, or it, under all the Ignominy and Reproach, that attend my Chain, by which I am held, as a Prisoner of the Lord, in order to my being put to Death.

17 *But when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found* me.

17. But when he came to *Rome*, he was so far from being shy of appearing to have any Concern with me, that he took great Pains to enquire where, and in what Prison, or in what Ward I was shut up; and did not rest till he had found me out, and got Access to me.

18 *The Lord grant unto him that he may find Mercy of the Lord in that Day. And in how many Things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.*

18. O may the Lord Jesus, for whose Sake this his Servant has been so exceeding compassionate, kind and useful to me under my Sufferings, May he, and God the Father, in the Riches of his Grace thro' him, return it manifold into his own Bosom, not only in this World, but especially in the World to come, that he himself may find Mercy of the great Lord and Judge of all, to be own'd of him before his Father and the holy Angels, when the *Times of refreshing* (ἀναψύξεως) *shall come from his Presence*; (Acts iii. 19.) and to be publickly adjudged to eternal Life, according to the Greatness of his Mercy, (*Jude, ver.* 21.) at the great Day of Account, (See the Note on *ver.* 12.) that final, most important and decisive of all Days, for a succeeding Eternity! Gratitude demands my best Wishes for such a fast Friend, who still approves himself to be so to the last, in the very worst of Times: And you very well know, and I can't forget, in how many Instances of great Kindness he formerly assisted and refreshed me, by various Means, under all my Troubles, when I was at *Ephesus*.

RECOLLECTIONS.

Shall an inspired Apostle commit the true Doctrine of Christ to Ministers, by immediate Commission from God? And shall they not keep it pure and uncorrupt, and be ready to suffer for it, in Dependence on his Power, as exerted by the Holy Spirit? Or shall they preach it, and the People not regard it? What a Contempt is this of Divine Authority, and of the glorious Gospel, at once! But O happy Souls, that serve God with a pure Heart, and receive the Gospel with unfeigned Faith and Love, after the Example of religious Ancestors; and lay themselves out to propagate it, in like Manner, to others! It contains the Promise of everlasting Life through Jesus Christ; opens the eternal Purpose of God about the Salvation of his People; is a Means of their effectual Calling; assures the Believer that the Sting and Power of Death are vanquished for him; and sets the immortal Life of Soul and Body, and the Way of obtaining it, in the clearest Light. Who would not be contented to undergo the severest Persecutions, without Fear or Shame, for the Sake of the rich Advantages, that are to be hoped for from it? May we have the firmest Confidence in Christ, as the all-sufficient Saviour, to secure the great Concerns of our Souls, that we commit by Faith to his Care, against the great Day of Account!—How dear is one sincere Servant of Christ to another, as Partakers of the

same

far Faith, and embarked in the same noble Cause! How greatly do they all need; and how heartily do they wish, and daily pray for Grace, Mercy and Peace to be multiplied to one another, from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ! How affectionately are they desirous of each others Company, especially in Times of great Tribulation! How tenderly do they sympathize one with another in their Afflictions! How concerned are they that a due Improvement be made of the Gifts of the Spirit, which are graciously bestowed upon their Brethren in the Ministry, who are endow'd, according to the Spirit of the Gospel, not with a timorous, cowardly Temper, but with holy Fortitude and Love, Sobriety, Wisdom and sound Judgment, for fulfilling their Trust, in the Midst of all Difficulties, Opposition and Danger! And while many desert the Cause of Christ, and his suffering Servants, like *Phygellus* and *Hermogenes*, Blessed be God, there are others, who, like *Onesiphorus*, are not ashamed to own them in the worst of Times; but are willing to seek Opportunities of shewing all possible Regard to them. May the Lord be gracious to such and their Families; and grant them Mercy to eternal Life in the Day of Judgment!

C H A P. II.

The Apostle directs Timothy *to the Grace, that is in Christ, for all Spiritual Strength,* 1. *Exhorts him to take Care that there be a Succession of faithful Ministers, and to persevere in his own Work, with Constancy and Diligence, like a Soldier, a Combatant, and a Husbandman, encouraging him hereunto by his own Example, and Assurances of a happy Issue of his Faithfulness,* 2,—13. *Advises him to guard against striving about unprofitable and pernicious Words, and to study to approve himself to God, warning him to shun vain Babblings and dangerous Errors, that eat like a Canker, as in the Instances of* Hymeneus *and* Philetus, *and comforts him with the Thought, that nevertheless the Foundation of God stands sure,* 14—19. *Tells him that several Sorts of Professors are to be expected in the Church, as various Sorts of Vessels are used in a great House,* 20, 21. *and charges him to flee youthful Lusts, and to manage the Whole of his Conversation, Ministry, and Zeal against Error, with a becoming Meekness of Spirit, as most likely to be successful,* 22—26.

T E X T.	*P A R A P H R A S E.*
1 THOU *therefore, my Son, be strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus.*	1. CONSIDERING therefore the Things that have been mentioned, (*Chap.* i. 15—18.) and the Danger of taking a wrong Part in them, Let me intreat you, my dear Son in the Faith, Fellowship and Ministry of the Gospel, not to be self-confident, or trust in the Grace you have already received, which, left to itself, would soon fail; but to have a constant Recourse, and go out of yourself to the Fountain of all Grace, that you may be *strong in the Lord and in the Power of his Might*; (Ephes. vi. 10.) may keep up an intire Dependence on the inexhaustible Fund of Grace that is treasured up in Christ, your Head, and in the free Favour of God, as residing, manifesting and exhibiting itself in him; and may continually *receive of his Fulness Grace for Grace* (John i. 16.)

2 *And the Things that thou hast heard of me among many Witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful Men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

2. And, setting out in this Strength for the Discharge of every Duty, and for propagating the true Doctrines of the Gospel, which I received by immediate Revelation, and communicated to you, and in a public solemn Manner committed to your Trust, at your Ordination in the Presence of many Witnesses, * according to the numerous Testimonies that are given to them by the Law and the Prophets (*Rom.* iii. 21.) Take heed that you transmit them pure and uncorrupted, just as you received them from me, to such other Ministers, as approve themselves to be faithful Believers, that have the Glory of Christ, the Truth of the Gospel, and the Good of Souls at Heart, and are well furnished with Knowledge and Utterance, Gifts and Graces, to dispose and qualify them for explaining, proving, defending and applying the whole Counsel of God to their Hearers.

3 *Thou therefore endure Hardness as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ.*

3. As this is the noblest of all Services, Spare no Pains, nor be afraid of any Difficulties, or Dangers, you may be exposed to in it; but consider that as you are in a State of Warfare, attended with many Sufferings and Hardships, in the Way to Victory and Triumph; so you ought to acquit yourself with holy Resolution, Vigour and Courage, like a good Soldier that fights as a Volunteer in the Cause, and under the Banner of Jesus Christ, the Captain of Salvation, who is able to support you under, and carry you through, all your Toils and Troubles, and crown them with everlasting Honours.

4 *No Man that warreth entangleth himself with the Affairs of* this *Life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a Soldier.*

4. According to the Obligations of this Character, you should give yourself wholly to the Work of the Ministry: (1 *Tim.* iv. 15.) For you know that, by the *Roman* Laws, no Man that lists, as a Soldier, into the Imperial Army, is allowed to spend his Time, and involve himself, in the common Business of Trade, Husbandry, or other secular Employments; but is to devote himself intirely to the Duty of his military Station, that he may diligently fulfil the Orders of his General, and be approved of him, who has taken him upon the Muster-Rolls: In like Manner you, as a Minister of Christ, ought not to follow civil Callings to intangle your Thoughts, and swallow up your Time; but to apply them to spiritual Exercises in the Service of Christ, your sovereign Lord and King, that you may acquit yourself agreeable to his Will, who has appointed, called and authorised you to fight the good Fight of Faith, till you lay hold on eternal Life (1 *Tim.* vi. 12.) †

5. And

* *Among many Witnesses* (διὰ πολλῶν μαρτύρων) properly signifies *by* many Witnesses; and tho' it may sometimes be understood to mean *among*, as in 2 *Cor.* i. 8, and *Gal.* iii. 19, and is so render'd here; yet, as this is an exceeding rare Construction, I have taken in both this, and the other most common Sense of the *Preposition*.

† In this and the next Verse, there is a plain Allusion to the *Roman* Law of Arms, and to *that* of the *Grecian*-Games; according to *the first* of which, the Soldier was not to engage in civil Occupations; (Vid.

5 *And if a Man also strive for Masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.*

5. And as Ministers are call'd to various Sorts of Conflicts, (*Acts* xx. 22, 23, 24. and *Phil.* iii. 12, 13, 14.) If any Man enter the Lists, like a Combatant in the *Grecian* Games, he is never reckon'd a Victor, nor crown'd as such, unless he keep to the stated Rules of those Exercises, which require great Pains in running, wrestling, and the like; so you, who have enter'd into Christ's Service, are to exert yourself with Labour and Diligence, for overcoming all Opposers, in his Way and Work, according to the Prescriptions of his Word, as ever you expect that, *when the chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a Crown of Glory, that fadeth not away,* (1 *Pet.* v. 4.)

6 *The Husbandman that laboureth, must be first Partaker of the Fruits.*

6. As Ministers are also compared to Labourers in the Lord's Harvest, or Vineyard, (*Luke* x. 2, and xx. 9, &c.) You know that the Husbandman must take much Pains in plowing and sowing, or in digging and planting, and must do this with Patience for some Length of Time, before he can have a good Crop, that he may gather the Fruits of the Earth; so you are to be laborious in preaching the Gospel for the Glory of Christ, and the Good of Souls, and to wait with Patience before-hand for the coming of the Lord, that you may *rejoice in the Day of Christ, that you have not run in vain, nor labour'd in vain* (James v. 7. and Phil. ii. 16.)

7 *Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee Understanding in all Things.*

7. Pray consider seriously what I deliver to you under these Figures, that you may look upon yourself, and behave, as a Soldier, a Combatant, and a Husbandman, in the Work of the Lord; and may reckon upon Hardships and Labour in attending the Services, which belong to Persons of all those Characters; and at the same Time may maintain a comfortable Hope of a blessed and gracious Reward at the End of them all: For in this Way of reflecting on these Things, the Lord, as I trust and heartily wish, * will further enlighten your Mind in all Wisdom and spiritual Understanding, (*Col.* i. 9.) to make a right Judgment and Application of them, and so impress upon your own Heart a deep, and abiding Sense of your Duty in this, and all Things else that concerns you, as a Christian, or a Minister of Jesus Christ.

8 *Remember that Jesus Christ of the*

8. The grand Article, which I would have you constantly bear in Mind, for your own Support and Encouragement

(Vid. *Grot.* in loc.) and according to *the last*, the Combatant was to keep strictly to the Rules of the Game, without which he could not be crowned with a Garland, as a Conqueror, (See the Notes on 1 *Cor.* ix. 24—27.)

* *The Lord give thee Understanding* (δῴη) is in the *Alexandrian, Clarmont*, and other good Copies (Vid. *Mil.* in loc.) *the Lord will give thee Understanding*: (δώσει) But if we retain the common Reading, yet, as Dr. *Whitby* observes, (δῴη) *give* is often used for (δώσει) *will give*; and as the Particle (γὰρ) here render'd *and*, very rarely, if ever, bears that Sense; but is a casual Particle, and signifies *for*, I have considered it in that View, and yet glanced at the other, since it don't appear to be *expletive* in this Place, as it sometimes is in others.

Seed of David, was raised from the dead, according to my Gospel:

under your Trials, and Sufferings, and remind others of in your Preaching, for their Conversion and Establishment in the Faith and Hope of the Gospel, is, that Jesus the anointed Saviour, who according to the Flesh proceeded from the Loins of the famous Patriarch *David*, having suffered unto Death, as a Sacrifice for Sin, was raised again from the Dead for our Justification, (*Rom* iv. 25) according to the glad Tidings of Salvation, that I have preached and confirmed in my Ministry, which indeed is not my Gospel, as though I were the Author of it, but a Dispensation of which is committed unto me. (1 *Cor.* ix 17.)

9 *Wherein I suffer Trouble as an Evil-doer, even unto Bonds; but the Word of God is not bound.*

9. This is a great and fundamental Truth, for the preaching of which to the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, I undergo the severest Persecutions, even to Confinement, in which I am held in Bonds, as though I were a Malefactor, not fit to live; and so am prevented publickly preaching it, as I used to do, and, were it the Will of God, would still gladly persist in: But, blessed be his Name, his Word is not confined, or shut up in a Corner, or hindered from being proclaimed and made effectual in many Places, by others of his Servants, for bringing in Multitudes of Souls to Christ; and it is further confirmed by the Testimony I give to the Power of divine Grace in my patient and joyful Sufferings for it.

10 *Therefore I endure all Things for the Elect's Sake, that they may also obtain the Salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal Glory.*

10. The Thought of what has been already, and will still further be done by the Power of God, as attending the Ministrations of the Gospel, is such a Comfort to me, that I cheerfully submit to all the Distresses that are, or can be laid upon me, in Love and Zeal for the spiritual Welfare of those, *whom God hath from the Beginning chosen to Salvation, through Sanctification of the Spirit, and Belief of the Truth*, (2 Thess. ii. 13) that they, encouraged by my Example, may also be induced to believe, cordially embrace, and boldly profess the Truth and Excellence of the Gospel, notwithstanding the Violence of the Times; and may, in this Way of God's Appointment, arrive at an actual Possession of that Salvation, which consists, not only in an intire Freedom from all Evil; but likewise in the complete Enjoyment of an eternal Inheritance of all possible Honour and Delight, that is purchased by, and reserved in Christ for them, who *are called, by the Gospel, to the obtaining of the Glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*. (2 Thess. ii. 14.)

11 It is *a faithful Saying. For if we be dead with* him, *we shall also live with* him:

11. This Doctrine of Christ's Death and Resurrection, and of the future Glory of the Elect, who are, or shall be brought to believe in him, is certainly true; and, for the Comfort of his suffering Servants, may be fully depended upon: For if, in Conformity to the crucified *Jesus*, and by Virtue derived from him, as the Head, with whom we are vitally united, we be dead to Sin and to this World, and willing to lose our mortal Lives for his Sake; we also, in Conformity to him, and by the Power of his Resurrection,

shall

shall certainly be quickned and raised to a glorious Immortality, to live in the heavenly World with him. (See *John* xii. 25, 26, *Rom.* viii. 17, and 1 *Pet.* iv. 13.)

12 *If we suffer, we shall also reign with* him: *If we deny* him, *he also will deny us:*

12. If we patiently endure Reproach and all Manner of Tribulation for Christ's Sake, like what he himself underwent for ours, we shall also be exalted to the Dignity of sitting with him on his Throne, as *Kings and Priests to God and his Father*: (Rev. i. 6, and iii. 21) If, on the contrary, any of us, who profess to be his Disciples and Servants, are so terrified with Fear of suffering the Loss of worldly Honour, Ease and Enjoyments, or of Liberty, or Life itself, as to deny the Truth of the Gospel, and cast off our Profession of him, or to be ashamed to own him and his Cause, and either doctrinally or practically deny him, he will also be ashamed of us, and deny that he ever knew or approved of us, *when he shall come in his own Glory, and in his Father's, and of the Holy Angels.* (Luke. ix. 26, and xii. 8, 9.)

13 *If we believe not,* yet *he abideth faithful: He cannot deny himself.*

13. Whether we believe this comfortable Truth on one hand, or this awful Denunciation on the other, or not; yet he who has peremptorily assured us of both in his Word, and is the *Amen*, the faithful and true Witness, will certainly perform his gracious Promises to them that believe in, and own him; and will execute his just Threatnings upon Apostates: 'Tis not consistent with the Perfections, Veracity and Immutability of his Nature and Will, to act contrary to his settled Declarations of Mercy and Judgment, with regard to his final Proceedings in the great Day of Account; for this would be as impossible for him to do, as to deny that he is God, and the impartial Judge of all.

14 *Of these Things put* them *in Remembrance, charging* them *before the Lord, that they strive not about Words to no Profit,* but *to the Subverting of the Hearers.*

14. Remind those that you minister to, and introduce into the Ministry, of these important Things, on which their Salvation depends, and which it behoves them to regard above all Things else; and charge them in the Name, by the Authority, and as in the Presence of the Lord Jesus, as ever they will answer it to him at his coming to Judgment, that they don't, instead of attending to these substantial and interesting Things, go into warm, or trifling Disputations about empty Words, like *Jewish* Fables, and Genealogies, (1 *Tim.* i. 4) which are of no Manner of Advantage to Religion and Godliness; but tend to puzzle and pervert the Minds of Hearers, and turn them off from the Truth of the Gospel.

15 *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a Workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.*

15. Let it be your great Study and Endeavour, by Help from Heaven, (παραστησαι) to present, or yield yourself an approved Servant to God, that you may be like a good Workman, who has no Occasion to be ashamed on account of Neglect, Unskilfulness, Unfaithfulness, or any other remarkable Defect; and that, as the *Jewish* Priests were very careful and exact in cutting up, and separating the several Parts of the Sacrifices, that were, or were not to be offered;

offered; so you may use the utmost Care and good Judgment, in separating between Truth and Error, important and trifling Things; and in giving to every one a Portion of God's Word in due Season, with a proper Application of its various Parts to the Circumstances of your Hearers; and (ὀρθοτομοῦντα) in cutting out before them the right Way of Truth, Holiness and Happiness, by Preaching and Example, according to the Gospel of Christ.

16 *But shun profane and vain Bablings: For they will increase unto more Ungodliness.*

16. But be sure to avoid, oppose, and turn away from all irreverent, defiling, and noisy, but daring and empty Discourse, that degrades the Nature and Perfections of God, and the Purity of the Gospel, which too many go into: For such Ways of Talking will tend unto, and such Talkers themselves will by that means go, still further and further, into Errors and Practices, that are contrary to true Religion, and are like to issue in the Height of all Impiety.

17 *And their Word will eat as doth a Canker: Of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus;*

17. And their Doctrine will be infectious to others, as well as injurious to their own Souls: For, if it be let alone, it will spread in the Church, and eat out the Vitals of Religion; even as a Gangrene, when it is got into any Part of the Flesh, eats it away, by Degrees, to the Destruction of the whole Body, and of Life itself. Among such pernicious and ungodly Talkers, there are two notorious ones, *Hymeneus* (1 Tim. i. 20) and *Philetus* by Name;

18 *Who concerning the Truth have erred, saying, that the Resurrection is past already; and overthrow the Faith of some.*

18. Who have given themselves up to such profane and vain Babling, (*ver.* 16) as has at length carried them off from the Truth of divine Revelation, and into the most destructive Errors, relating to the true Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead; they affirming that, whatsoever Christ, or any of the sacred Writers have said about a proper Resurrection, it is to be taken in some mystical or figurative Sense, that is over-past already in this World *, and not in a literal Sense, as though there were to be a real Resurrection of the Body in the World to come: And by their bold and subtle Assertions, and Arguings on this Point, they have so far prevailed, as to turn some off from that, and every other sound Doctrine, which they before professed to believe.

19 *Nevertheless, the Foundation of God standeth sure, having this Seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every*

19. But notwithstanding all this, the fundamental Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead is certainly the Truth of God, he having set his Seal to it by testifying his Approbation of the Apostles, as his faithful Servants, whom he inspired and commissioned to preach it. And notwithstanding such melancholy Instances of Apostates, which

* All Conjectures about the Sense, in which *Hymeneus* and *Philetus* held *that the Resurrection is past already*, are so exceeding uncertain, without any sufficient Foundation to support them, that I cannot pretend to say particularly what it was; only it seems evident in the Nature of Things, that they rested on some figurative, political, or spiritual and mystical Meaning, which they put upon the Words, to supplant and evade the Notion of a proper Resurrection of the Body.

often

one that nameth the Name of Christ depart from Iniquity.

often occasion Fears to arise in the Hearts of some sincere Believers, lest their Faith should be also overthrown, and they should fall after the Example of others, that seemed to be much greater Proficients in Christianity than themselves; yet the Ground of Security to God's Elect, (*v.* 10) and of an assured Hope, that their Faith, who are built upon Christ as a Foundation, and have a Principle of Grace, as a Ground-work of Salvation, shall be answered, and that all the Promises of the Gospel abide firm and steady, † lies in the eternal and unchangeable Purpose of God; it hav- this *Motto*, engraven, as it were on a Seal, to confirm the Decree, and to signify the Safety, Secrecy and Appropriation of the Objects of his Love; Whatsoever becomes of others, that make fair Pretences to Religion, the Lord in a distinguishing Manner affectionately knows, and everlastingly owns them, whom he hath chosen for himself, and claims as his peculiar Property, (See the Note on *Rom.* viii. 30) that he may keep them by his Power through Faith unto Salvation: (1 *Pet.* i. 2, 5.) And, to show how inseparably Holiness and Eternal Happiness are connected in the Decree, and in the Execution of it, as also to prevent presumptuous Confidences in Electing Love, without any Experience of its proper Fruits and Effects, which are the only Proofs and satisfying Evidences of it to ourselves, the Seal bears this further Inscription, Let every one who makes a Profession of Christ's Name, and of trusting in him for Salvation, think himself indispensibly bound, and accordingly make it his great Care and Concern, to depart in Heart and Life, and keep at the farthest Distance, from every Kind, Degree and Instance of Sin.

20 *But in a great House there are not only Vessels of Gold, and of Silver, but also of Wood, and of Earth; and some to Honour, and some to Dishonour.*

20. But in the visible Church there are Professors and Ministers of higher and lower Rank; and some of them are excellent, honourable and approved of God, as those whom he knows to be his; (*ver.* 19) and others are mean and contemptible, a Dishonour to, and disapproved of him, like those that err from the Truth; (*ver.* 18) even as in the great House of a Prince or Nobleman, there are not only magnificent Vessels, such as are made of Gold or Silver for various and excellent Offices; but there are also other Vessels, formed out of meaner Materials, such as Wood or Clay, for inferior Purposes; and some of them are of so great Worth and Service, as to be in high Esteem, and reflect an Honour upon their Lord and Master; and others are so despicable and insignificant, as to be of little or no

† Many are the Interpretations that have been given of this *Foundation of God which stands sure*; some making it to mean a *Work of Grace*, or Principle of Holiness in the Heart; others, *Faith*; others, *Christ*; others, the *Promises of the Gospel*; others, *the Doctrine of the Resurrection*; and others, *the Doctrine of Election*; and they are all included in the Paraphrase, while it principally points to the last of them.

Account,

Account, and unworthy to be deemed a Part of the Furniture of such a great Personage's House.

21 *If a Man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a Vessel unto Honour, sanctified and meet for the Master's Use*, and *prepared unto every good Work.*

21. If therefore any one, who claims a Share in the Blessings, Privileges and Services of the great Lord of the Church, keep himself clear of the corrupt Teachers, Errors and ungodly Practices, but now specified; (*ver.* 16, 17, 18) he shall be esteemed and found to be, whether Minister or private Christian, an excellent Vessel of Mercy, (*Rom.* ix. 24) designed and formed for the noblest Purposes; purified and consecrated to the Service of God, by the Holy Ghost; and commodiously fitted, apt and ready for acceptable Employments in his Lord and Master's House; and thoroughly furnished (*Chap.* iii. 17) for the Performance of every Work and Duty, that is good in itself, or by divine Institution; good as to the Matter, Manner and End of it, according to the good Rule of the Word, to the Glory of God, and the Good of his own and others Souls.

22 *Flee also youthful Lusts: But follow Righteousness, Faith, Charity, Peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure Heart.*

22. And as ever you, my Son *Timothy*, would approve yourself to God and your own Conscience, in the Discharge of your Trust, Labour diligently, by his Grace, to fly with the utmost Speed and Abhorrence from all irregular Inclinations, Passions and Appetites; such as Ambition, Pride, Self-conceit, unadvised Rashness, and Sensuality of various Kinds, which young Men are prone to: Give no Way to these; but let it be your special Care to pursue in your Preaching, and Practice as an Example to others, (1 *Tim.* iv. 12) the great Things, that relate to Righteousness, in its full Extent; to Fidelity and Faith in Christ, and in God through him; to a charitable and peaceable Temper and Behaviour towards all those, of what Denomination soever, that invoke, worship and adore the Lord Jesus, and God the Father through him, in the Sincerity of their Hearts, as purified by Faith, and purged from an evil Conscience by the Blood of Christ.

23 *But foolish and unlearned Questions avoid, knowing that they do gender Strifes.*

23. But, as I have already advis'd you, (*ver.* 16.) Lay aside all Enquiries and Debates about impertinent, fruitless Points of Controversy, that have nothing of true and solid Wisdom in them; Don't intermeddle with these, as being assured that they tend only to beget quarrelsome and angry Contentions, to the Disturbance of the Peace of the Church, and Hindrance of the Success of the Gospel.

24 *And the Servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all* Men, *apt to teach, patient;*

24. But 'tis no Way becoming any Servant of the Lord Jesus, were he only a private Christian, much less if he be a Minister of the Gospel of Peace, to engage in any Disputes with a quarrelsome and litigious Spirit; since the *Wrath of Man works not the Righteousness God:* (James i. 20.) But, on the contrary, he ought to be kind and courteous in his Behaviour toward Persons of all Characters; should go into the most inoffensive and least provoking Manner of conveying the Truth to them in Love, and with clear Scriptural Evidence; and he shou'd keep his Temper, with all

Patience

Patience and Long-suffering, in bearing not only the Infirmities of the Weak, but even the Prejudices and Untractableness of those, that don't immediately embrace the Doctrines of the Gospel;

25 In Meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them Repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth;

25. Endeavouring to win upon them that set themselves against the Truth, by Lenity, Calmness and Sweetness of Temper, as well as by Strength of Argument; and so gently instilling Knowledge, as a Father would into the tender Minds of his Children; in Hope that, possibly, in due Season, God may convince them of their Error, and bring them to a Sense of the Evil and Danger of persisting in it, and at length to relinquish it, and embrace, own and boldly profess the Truth as it is in Jesus;

26 And that they may recover themselves out of the Snare of the Devil, who are taken captive by him at his Will.

26. And that in this Way, and by these Means, (ανανηψωσι) they may awake out of the ensnaring Errors, by which they were lulled asleep, and intoxicated like drunken Men, and in which the Devil had caught and held them, who, like Captives of War taken alive, (εζωγρημενοι) are in his Hands to be inslaved, domineer'd over and ruin'd by him, according to his malicious Will and Pleasure, *who walks about, as a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour.* (1 Pet. v. 8.)

Recollections.

What need have we of a continual Recourse to, and Supply from the Fountain of all Grace, which is in Christ, for the Performance of every Duty! And how great is our Encouragement to depend upon him, and to own and honour him! For, according to the Gospel-Account of him, he is raised from the Dead; and, whatever becomes of Apostates, the Ground of Security to God's Elect stands firm in his eternal Purpose, whose distinguishing Love knows and owns them, and has laid upon them the most powerful and endearing Obligations to depart from all Iniquity. They that bravely suffer, even unto Death, for Christ in this World, shall live and reign with him for ever in the next; but they, that are ashamed of him and his Gospel, shall be rejected by him: Whatsoever we think of it now, he will proceed, in the Judgment of the Great Day, according to his Promises and Threatenings, and can as soon cease to be, as falsify his Word. These Things are worthy to be remembred and inculcated upon others, just as we have received them from the great Apostle; and they ought to be committed, as a sacred Trust, to able and faithful Ministers among many Witnesses, that they may preach them to the People. And O with what Alacrity should they endure all Hardships in fulfilling their Office, as good Soldiers of Jesus Christ, and as Wrestlers and Labourers in his Service; and not embarrass themselves with secular Affairs! They ought not to be discouraged at Tribulations and Bonds, or Death itself, if they be called to suffer them in the Cause of Christ, and for the sake of the Elect, that they may be eternally saved together with themselves. How ambitious should they be of behaving to the Approbation of their great Lord and Master, as Vessels of Honour, sanctified and fitted for his Use, and for every good Work, and as judicious and faithful Preachers, that need not be ashamed, for want of Skill or Fidelity in making just and proper Distributions of the Word of Truth! And how carefully should they avoid, and set themselves against, all Errors, especially such as lead to fruitless Contentions and Ungodliness, and are subversive of fundamental Articles of Faith; and, unless put a Stop to, will spread with as mischievous Influence, as a Gangrene, like that of *Hymeneus* and *Philetus* about the Resurrection! The best Way of confuting dangerous Errors, and recommending Gospel-Truths, is to abstain from all Vices of Body and Mind, and particularly from those that young Men are most apt to indulge; and to live in the Practice of Righteousness, Faith, Love and Peace, with all upright Christians; to be courteous towards all Men; and to overcome Opposers by a Sweetness of Temper, Patience and Forbearance, joined with clear and scriptural Reasonings, to

inform and persuade them; in Hope that God, by these Means, may convince them of their Sin and Folly, and bring them over to believe and profess the good Doctrines they before had opposed; and so, by his Grace, may awake out of their dead Sleep, and escape out of the Devil's Snare, as those that are delivered from his Will and Power, and are turned to God. The Lord help us to reflect seriously on these, and all his faithful Sayings; and give us Wisdom and Grace to make a right Improvement of them to his Glory, and our own and others Good!

CHAP. III.

The Apostle foretels the Rise of dangerous Enemies to the Truth and Holiness of the Gospel, 1—9. *Proposes his own Example for* Timothy's *Imitation, in Opposition to them,* 10—13. *And exhorts him to persist in the Doctrines he had learned from him, and from the Holy Scriptures, which are of divine Inspiration, and every way sufficient for the noblest Purposes,* 14—17.

TEXT.

1 *THIS know also, that in the last Days perilous Times shall come.*

2 *For Men shall be Lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, Blasphemers, disobedient to Parents, unthankful, unholy,*

PARAPHRASE.

1. I Would further remind you, as I did in my former Epistle, (*Chap.* iv. 1) that under the Gospel-Dispensation, which is the last and best that ever will be set up in this World, Days of exceeding great Difficulty and Danger (χαλεποὶ) will trouble the Church, not only on account of Persecutions; but chiefly by Reason of sad Corruptions in Doctrines and Manners, as they already begin to appear, and will gradually work till they issue in a much greater Apostacy still, toward the latter Part of this last Dispensation *.

2. For, to give you some Signs of the Days I mean, by which they may be known, A Set of wicked carnally-minded Men will arise under the Christian-Name, that will be of a notoriously selfish Spirit, aiming merely at their own secular Interest, Honour and Ease, without any Regard to the Good of others; insatiable in their Thirst and Pursuits after the Riches of this World; vain-glorious Boasters of their own Endowments and Advantages; lofty and arrogant in their Temper and Behaviour; Defamers of Christ's

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* The Corruptions specified in the following Verses are very remarkably exemplified in the *Romish* Church; in their selfish secular Views, Pride and Blasphemies; in their Children's being unnaturally put into Monastries and Nunneries, sometimes without, and at others with the Consent of their Parents; in Unthankfulness to God, and to the Princes that raised the Popes to their Dignity and Authority; in their breaking Faith with, and false Accusations of them, that they call *Hereticks*; in their cruel Persecutions, and contemptuous Treatment of good Men and Things; in their Treachery and Deceit, and traitorous Actings against Sovereign Princes; in their insolent and haughty Behaviour, and indulging unto Luxury and unlawful Pleasures, and insinuating themselves into, corrupting and fishing out the Secrets of Families by auricular Confessions; in their perverting the Faith, and pretending to Miracles; and all this under specious Forms of Piety, and external Shows of Devotion, instead of true Love to God and Godliness, &c. (See also the Notes on 1 *Tim.* iv. 1, and 2 *Thess.* ii. 3, 4.)

Offices and People, Doctrines and Ways; undutiful to their Fathers and Mothers, rejecting their Authority; basely ungrateful to them, and other Benefactors, and above all to God for the good Things they receive from him by their Means; unsanctified, impious and profane;

3 Without natural Affection, Truce-breakers, false Accusers, incontinent, fierce, Despisers of those that are good,

3. Destitute of all that Tenderness and natural Affection, (ἄστοργοι) which is due to Mankind in general, to near Relations more particularly, and from Parents to Children most of all, which is found even among the Brutes themselves toward their Young; perfidious Violators of the most solemn Engagements, Promises and Contracts; false Accusers (διάβολοι) of other Men, like Devils incarnate, that delight in unjust Calumnies; intemperate, (ἀκρατεῖς) under the Power of ungovernable Appetites, Lusts and Passions; furious and cruel in their Tempers and Treatment of others; without any true Love (ἀφιλάγαθοι) to the Righteous, that are more excellent than themselves, or to Things that are good.

4 Traitors, heady, high-minded, Lovers of Pleasures more than Lovers of God;

4. Betrayers of civil and sacred Trusts, and delivering up even their nearest akin to Miseries and Death, for Christ's Name's Sake; *(Mat.* x. 21, 22) headstrong, rash, daring and precipitant (προπετεῖς) in their Words and Behaviour; puffed up with the Pride and Vanity of their own Minds; intirely addicted to, and fond of sensual Pleasures, more than, and instead of, being well-affected toward God, and the Things that are pleasing in his Sight.

5 Having a Form of Godliness, but denying the Power thereof: from such turn away.

5. What further aggravates their monstrous Wickedness is, that they cloke and disguise it with a fair Show of Sanctity under a Profession of Christian-Religion, and of a Reverence of God, and with external Forms of Piety and Devotion; but at the same Time are utter Strangers and Enemies to, and practical Renouncers of the Life and Power of true Godliness to govern their Hearts and Lives. Now I would advise you to have nothing to do with such false Pretenders to the Christian-Name; but to reject them with Abhorrence, and keep at the remotest Distance from them, and from all Fellowship and Communion with them: Beware of them, as of Wolves in Sheeps Clothing. *(Mat.* vii. 15.)

6 For of this Sort are they which creep into Houses, and lead captive silly Women laden with Sins, led away with divers Lusts,

6. For this Sort of People are very sly in their Insinuations; They, with a Show of Innocence and extraordinary Holiness, *(Mat.* xxiii. 14) secretly wind themselves, like Snakes, into such Families, as they can get an Interest in, or Hopes of any Advantage by, that they may intrude into their Secrets, and exercise an absolute Tyranny over their Estates and Consciences; and they surprisingly wheedle and ensnare the Hearts and Affections of weak and ignorant People, who, like thoughtless giddy Women, under the Power of sinful Passions, are easily imposed upon, and misled by every plausible Pretence, that sooths and flatters their own corrupt Inclinations.

 7. And

7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the Knowledge of the Truth.

7. And so they are always running after every new Teacher, and hearkning to, and imbibing every new Doctrine; and are so disconcerted, unsettled and confounded by this Means, as never to be able to attain to a clear, judicious and saving Knowledge of the true Gospel of Christ.

8 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the Truth: Men of corrupt Minds, reprobate concerning the Faith.

8. Now as in former Days *Jannes* and *Jambres* †, two famous Magicians of *Egypt*, pretended to vie with *Moses* in working Miracles, and set themselves up against him, who came with a divine Commission to deliver the *Israelites* out of the House of Bondage; so these false Teachers set up themselves, and their Errors, with Pretences to Miracles, in Opposition to the plain Truth of the Gospel, and written Word of God, and to the faithful Servants of Christ, whom he has sent to preach Deliverance to Captives: And these Deceivers, like those Magicians, are Men of depraved and vitiated Minds, void of Judgment, and utterly disapproved, (ἀδόκιμοι) and disowned of God, (See the Note 2 *Cor.* xiii. 5) as to every thing that relates to the pure Doctrines of Faith, according to the Gospel-Revelation of them.

9 But they shall proceed no further: For their Folly shall be manifest unto all Men, *as theirs also was.*

9. But 'tis a sweet Support and Comfort in the most perilous Times (*ver.* 1) to be assured, as we may and ought to be, that these Men, though permitted to proceed very far in their pretended Miracles and Delusions, are under a divine Restraint, and shall certainly in God's Time be put a Stop to, and make no further Progress; but shall be intirely confuted and overthrown to their own Confusion: For (ἄνοια) the Folly and Madness of their sinful Opinions, and Methods of Management, shall at length be discovered with the plainest Evidence to the whole World; even as the *Egyptian*-Magicians, after they had made a fair Show of performing several Miracles, were at length defeated, and exposed to open Shame, and grievously tormented, in the Contest, which *Moses*, the Servant of the Lord, had with them. (*Ex.* vii. 12, and viii. 18, 19. and ix. 11.)

10 But thou hast fully known my Doctrine, Manner of Life, Purpose, Faith, Long-suffering, Charity, Patience,

10. But, to guard you against all such Seducers, and their corrupt Principles and Practices of every Kind, I would remind you of, and recommend to your Imitation, what you have seen and experienced of a contrary Strain in my Behaviour. You who have so much attended, and been so intimately acquainted with me, have sought after, and can't but have attained to a thorough Knowledge of the excellent Doctrine according to Godliness, that I have always

† The Names of *Jannes* and *Jambres* are not mentioned in any Part of the Old Testament; but are found, with a little Variation of Spelling, in several antient *Jewish* Writers, and are spoken of as the *Princes* or *Chiefs* of the Magicians; Accounts of which are collected at large by Dr. *Hammond* in his Notes on this Place, and in the Works of the learned Mr. *John Gregory*: (Part I. Chap. 15) And so the Apostle, as may be supposed, takes these Instances from *Jewish* Writings, and argues from their own Authors, that were currently received by that People.

taught;

taught; the Course of my Self-denying, holy and religious Conversation agreeable to it; the Sincerity and Steadiness of my Aims and Pursuits for promoting the Glory of God, and the Good of Souls; my Fidelity in preaching the pure Gospel of Christ under the Power of that Faith, which I myself have in him, and endeavour to propagate to others; the Forbearance and Lenity I have all along shown toward the Weak, the Ignorant and Unteachable; the Love I have shewn to God and Christ, and the Souls and Bodies of Men, whether Friends or Enemies, and especially to all that love the Lord Jesus in Sincerity and Truth; and the Patience that I have exercised toward my most violent Opposers, and under their most furious Outrage against me.

11 *Persecutions, Afflictions which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra, what Persecutions I endured? But out of them all the Lord delivered me.*

11. You have likewise fully known what severe Persecutions, and extreme Sufferings to the utmost Hazard of my Life, I have undergone, with holy Fortitude and Composure, in various Places for the Gospel's Sake, as particularly at *Antioch* in *Pisidia*, (Acts xiii. 14, 45, 50.) at *Iconium*, and at *Lystra*, two Cities of *Lycaonia*, in the lesser *Asia*; (Acts xiv. 2, 5, 6, 19.) * But, as you also well know, the Lord Jesus, whom I serve, and for whose Cause I suffer, stood by me, supported and preserved me, and delivered me out of all those Tribulations, in the last of which, namely at *Lystra*, he in a miraculous Manner restored my Life, after I was supposed to have been dead. (*Acts* xiv. 20.) In Reflection therefore on those wonderful Appearances of the Lord for me in all my Troubles, you need not be afraid of Sufferings for Christ; but ought to be encouraged to trust in him for all seasonable Assistances and Consolations, if you are called to endure the like.

12 *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer Persecution.*

12. And indeed such is the Wickedness and Violence of the present and approaching Days, and such the general Corruption of Human Nature in all Ages, that whosoever are desirous and determined, and accordingly make it their Practice, to live after a truly religious Manner, in a holy Profession of Christ's Name, by Virtue derived from him, after his Example, and according to the Rules of his Word, they will be exposed to Sufferings for his Sake; and such is the Appointment of God for making the Members of Christ conformable to their Head, who went through Sufferings to Glory, that all Persons of this Character must expect to meet with, ought to prepare for, and will certainly more or less, in one Form or other, undergo Persecutions from the Hands, or Tongues of the Seed of the old Serpent, that is ever full of Enmity against the Church.

* As *Timothy* was an Inhabitant of *Lystra*, where *Paul* met with him, *Acts* xvi. 1, 'tis very probable that he was an Eye-Witness of the Peoples stoning the Apostle there, till they thought he had been dead, and of his wonderfully reviving afterwards; or, at least, he could not be ignorant of those notorious Facts in his own Town; and the Apostle here appeals to him about his Troubles, not only at *Lystra*, but also at *Antioch* and *Iconium*, as to one that had fully known them upon the surest Testimony, if not by ocular Demonstration.

13. But

13 *But Evil Men and Seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*

13. But Men of wicked Minds under a Form of Godliness, and seducing Impostors, are so far from submitting to Sufferings for Righteousness Sake, that they will stick at nothing to avoid them, or to bring them upon others that don't fall in with their Measures; They will be continually going further and further into Violence and Wickedness, and all that is bad in Principle and Practice, doing what in them lies to draw others into erroneous and sinful Paths; and being themselves Wanderers from the Truth, and the greatest Deceivers of their own Souls, as will most fully appear in the general Apostacy of the last Days under Antichristian-Powers.

14 *But continue thou in the Things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned* them;

14. But as for you, my dear Son *Timothy*, whatever others do, See that you abide perseveringly, stedfastly and immoveably in the Belief, Profession and Preaching of the pure, uncorrupted and important Doctrines of the Gospel, which you have embraced, and been fully convinced of, upon the strongest and most satisfying Evidence, as knowing by all the Signs of Apostleship, which have appeared in me, that I, of whom you have learned them, (*Chap.* i. 13, and ii. 2.) am no less than an immediately commissioned Servant of Jesus Christ, who have taught them by his express Command, and by special Revelation from him; and consequently, that you have learn'd them, by Means of my Ministry, from Christ himself, who is the *Amen, the faithful and true Witness*, and can't possibly deceive you.

15 *And that from a Child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation, thro' Faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

15. You also know and are very well assured, that they are intirely consonant to the divine Oracles of the Old Testament, which may well be call'd, by Way of Eminence and Distinction from all human Writings, *the Holy Scriptures*, as they were indited by the Holy Spirit, and delivered by holy Men about holy Things; (2 *Peter* i. 21.) and as they contain all the Principles of Holiness, with all Directions, Obligations and Motives to it, and are adapted, and bless'd of God, to make Men holy here, in order to a State of complete Holiness and Happiness hereafter. In the Knowledge of those sacred Oracles, you have been educated from your very Childhood up, by the diligent Care of your pious Mother and Grandmother, (*Chap.* i. 5.) who, as excellent Examples to all Christian-Parents, brought you betimes to read and treasure them up in your Memory, and to consider the Meaning of them; * which, together with

* *The Holy Scriptures*, which *Timothy* knew from a Child, in all Likelihood thro' the Care and Pains of his good Mother and Grandmother, must relate to the *Old-Testament Scriptures*; because none of the New-Testament Writings were then extant: And yet these were sufficient to make him wise to Salvation, through Faith in the Messiah that was to come, 'till he was revealed; and when the New-Testament was added to the Old, which *Timothy* by this Time was acquainted with, they were sufficient to make him wise to Salvation through Faith in Jesus Christ, as the true Messiah, who had actually appeared, and fulfilled all the Parts of his Office on Earth, that pertained to him as such: And if, during the State of the Old-Testament Church, their Scriptures were sufficient to make them wise to Salvation, through Faith in the *promised* Saviour; much more, through Faith in the *actually exhibited* Saviour, must all

with the Gospel-Revelation, as contain'd in the New Testament-Writings now extant, are such a comprehensive System of divine Things, as is every Way sufficient, in the Nature of Means, and will be effectual, through the attending Light and Influence of the blessed Spirit, to make you emphatically wise; wise toward God and for your own Soul; wise unto an Understanding of the Way, and taking the Course, which the Wisdom and Grace of God have appointed in his Word, for obtaining eternal Life, not by the Works of the Law, but through that Faith, which has Jesus Christ for its Object, and is led to trust in him alone for all Salvation.

16 *All Scripture* is *given by Inspiration of God, and* is *profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness:*

16. All the Sacred Writings, both of the Old and New Testament, are of Divine Original, as God, by his Spirit, directed and inspired the holy Penmen to deliver them exactly according to Truth; and they are all of great and excellent Use and Advantage, some in one Way, and others in another; either for revealing important Doctrines concerning God and ourselves, our Duty to him and one another, our State by Nature and by Grace, and the whole Scheme of Salvation thro' a Redeemer; or for reproving and convincing of Sin and Error, and of Sinners and Backsliders from the Truth and Holiness of the Gospel; or for rectifying and reforming what is amiss; or for Direction, in a Way of Faith and Obedience, unto the obtaining of Righteousness both for Justification and Sanctification, that we may be accounted righteous in Christ, and derive all renewing and purifying Grace and Assistance from him, for the performing of every Duty, and making us holy in Heart and Life.

17 *That the Man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good Works.*

17. And these Scriptures, taken all together, as exhibiting Old Testament-Types and Figures, Prophecies and Promises, and New Testament-Light and Accomplishments, and the plainest Discoveries of Christ in his Person and Offices, and as prescribing Duties of every Kind, are a perfect Rule of Faith and Practice; and contain all that can be necessary, not only to make a complete Christian, who, according to divine Appointment, devotes himself, as such, to the Service of God; but also a complete Minister of Christ, whom God has set apart for himself to declare his Mind and Will to others; and so they are suited, in the Nature of Means, throughly to instruct, fit and furnish one, as

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all the inspir'd Writings, taken together under the Gospel-State, be so; most of the New Testament-Writings having been extant before this Epistle was sent to *Timothy*. Though therefore Gospel-Light undoubtedly far exceeds all that ever went before it; and tho' it can't be said, that *every Part* of Scripture is *absolutely necessary* to be known in order to Salvation; yet they are all profitable in their Places, as infallible and inspired Writings for excellent and important Purposes: *ver.* 16. (See my *Standing Use of the Scriptures*) And now *the whole Canon* of *Scripture* is compleated, under Divine Inspiration of the New, as well as of the Old-Testament, there can be no Need of the Addition of any Doctrines, or Precepts, to direct our Faith, or Practice, that are not contained in them.

well

well as the other, for a due Understanding and Performance of every good Work, that he is called to, relating to God, himself and others.

RECOLLECTIONS.

We need not wonder if our Lot be cast in perilous Times, either through the Violence of Persecutions, or through Corruptions in Doctrine and Manners; since the Word of God has foretold them. And, alas! How many selfish, worldly-minded, vain-glorious, proud, ungrateful and impious Professors are there in our Day, especially in the Apostate Church of *Rome!* How many have thrown off natural Affection, and all Obligations to filial and parental Duty; and have given themselves up to Falshood, Treachery, Slander, Rashness, Insolence and every furious and inordinate Passion, and sensual Pleasure, in Preference to God himself! And how grievous is it, that any should indulge to all this under the Mask of an external Profession of Godliness, while they are averse to its Power in their Hearts and Lives; and that Men of such corrupt Minds should artfully insinuate themselves into, and captivate weak and ignorant People, who are governed and misled by sinful Appetites, and are perpetually following new Teachers and new Things, and are so disconcerted thereby, as never to attain to a right Knowledge of the Truth of the Gospel! The Seducers of such are wicked Men, and disapproved of God, as utterly destitute of true Faith, whatever their Pretences be; and therefore it behoves all Ministers and Christians to have nothing to do with them in Matters of Religion. Blessed be God, that all their Opposition to the Gospel is under his Controul; and that, tho' they may be permitted to run great Lengths, they at last, like the *Egyptian*-Magicians, shall be confuted, put a Stop to and exposed to open Shame. But O what an engaging Plan, of a contrary Strain, have we in the great Apostle's Doctrine, Manner of Life, steady Views to the Honour of Christ and the Good of Souls; and in his Faith and Faithfulness, Lenity, Love and Patience! Though he suffered the greatest Persecutions; yet the Lord was with him in them, and amazingly delivered him out of them. What an Encouragement is this to Believers, and faithful Servants of Christ, under any Tribulation, which they may expect and meet with for his Sake! While others therefore wax worse and worse, under the Power of Sin and Error, How concerned should we be to continue stedfast in the Faith, Profession and Practice of those Things, that we have learned from the Apostle's, and other Sacred Writings of the Old and New Testament! They are all inspired of God: Parents should early teach them to their Children; and they are sufficient to make us wise to Salvation, through Faith in Christ Jesus, and to answer all the Purposes of Truth and Holiness, of Refutation of Error, and Reformation of Manners, and of Instruction in the Way of Righteousness, to the Glory of God, and the Salvation of our own Souls; and they are such a perfect Rule of all that is to be believed and done, that Ministers and People may find the whole Compass of their Duty in them, and be throughly fitted, by their Means, for performing it, through divine Light and Grace, in every Instance here, till all be compleated in a better World.

CHAP. IV.

The Apostle most solemnly charges Timothy *to be diligent in his Ministerial Work, tho' many will not endure sound Doctrine,* 1—5. *Enforces the Charge from a Consideration of his own approaching Martyrdom, which would have a glorious Issue,* 6—8. *Desires him to come speedily to him, and bring* Mark *and certain mentioned Things along with him,* 9—13. *Cautions him against* Alexander *the Copper-Smith, and complains of such as had deserted him; but prays for them, and expresses his Faith as to his own Preservation to the heavenly Kingdom,* 14—18. *and concludes with Salutations and his usual Benediction,* 19—22.

TEXT.

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TEXT.

1 I *Charge* thee *therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the Quick and the Dead at his appearing, and his Kingdom;*

PARAPHRASE.

1. SINCE you are and will be surrounded with many Adversaries, and are so richly furnished for maintaining the Truth against them; and since all Scripture, which you are so well acquainted with, is of divine Original, and of such extensive Use and Advantage, as has been but now observed, (*Chap.* iii. 13——17.) I solemnly lay the following Injunction upon your Conscience, with regard to your faithfully discharging the Work of an Evangelist, as in the Sight and Presence of the all-seeing God, and the Heart-searching Saviour, (*Rev.* ii. 23.) and as you will answer it at the Bar of the Lord Christ, and before him, when he shall come to judge all Mankind, even all that shall be alive, or dead and raised again, at his glorious Appearance, in the great Day of Account, and at his finishing the whole Design of his Mediatorial Kingdom; and being revealed in all the Glory of his heavenly Kingdom, in which he, as God, together with the Father and Spirit, will reign, as in his essential Kingdom, and in which he, as the Head and King of the Church, will reign with a visible Pre-eminence, and they shall reign in and with him, in all possible Dignity, Grandeur and Delight for ever and ever. (See the Note on 1 *Cor.* xv. 24.)

2 *Preach the Word; be instant in Season, out of Season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all Long-Suffering and Doctrine.*

2. What I thus awfully charge upon you, as with a religious Oath, is this, Proclaim aloud, (κηρυξον) and with all Authority and Boldness, like one of Christ's Heralds, the inspired Word of God, as 'tis profitable for Doctrine: * Preach it with Earnestness and Diligence on the Lord's Days, and on other Days, in Times of Peace and of Persecution, in public and private, on stated and proper occasional Opportunities, when 'tis more or less likely to do good, as one that sows his Seed in the Morning and in the Evening, not knowing which shall prosper: (*Eccl.* xi. 6.) Apply the Word, as there may be Occasion, for Reproof, to convince Gainsayers of their Errors; for reprehending Sinners and Backsliders, to reclaim and reform them; and for counselling, exhorting and encouraging Believers, to go on in the Way of Righteousness: Insist on these various Parts and Uses of the Word, with all Meekness, Patience, Constancy and Perseverance; and in a free, open and faithful Declaration of the whole Counsel of God, without adding to it, or taking from it, or altering and corrupting it, whatever Difficulties, Trials and Opposition you may meet with on that Account.

* Here seems to me to be a Reference to the several Uses of *the Word*, or *Scripture*, which had been specified *Chap*. iii. 16; and therefore several Passages in this Verse are paraphras'd in Correspondence to that.

3 *For the Time will come when they will not endure sound Doctrine; but after their own Lusts shall they heap to themselves Teachers, having itching Ears;*

3. For as already there begins to be; so in a little while, and yet more in Process of Time, there will be perilous Days, when Men of corrupt Minds, as I have before warn'd you, (*Chap.* iii. 1—8, 13.) will be so nettled at the wholesome, pure, unmix'd Doctrine of the Gospel, that they will not bear to hear it; but, being enraged against it, thro' their own Pride, Lusts, Passions and Prejudices, will seek out, and multiply to themselves, such false Teachers, as shall tickle their Ears with new Notions, and unscriptural Discourses, that please their Fancies, and are agreeable to their own vitiated Taste.

4 *And they shall turn away* their *Ears from the Truth, and shall be turned unto Fables.*

4. And through the Love of Novelty, that will gratify their Curiosity and corrupt Inclinations, they will turn a deaf Ear to the Truths of the Gospel, and will eagerly listen after, and fondly embrace, every vain, empty, trifling and senseless Story, like *Jewish* Fables and Traditions, (1 *Tim.* i. 4.) to divert and amuse themselves, and keep their own Consciences easy.

5 *But watch thou in all Things, endure Afflictions, do the Work of an Evangelist, make full Proof of thy Ministry.*

5. But as for you, my dear Son *Timothy*, Be upon your Guard against all such Sort of People and their Errors; and watch for all Opportunities of confuting them, and establishing the Truth in Opposition to them: Watch against all Temptations; watch over your own Spirit and Conduct at all Times, and in all Circumstances; and watch for the Souls of those that are committed to your Care: (*Heb.* xiii. 17.) Submit with Meekness to, and sustain with Fortitude and Patience, whatever Tribulations your Adversaries may bring upon you: Notwithstanding all their Attempts to dishearten and silence you, Go on in the Name and Strength of the Lord with your Work, as an Evangelist; and thoroughly perform all the Parts of your Ministry with Fidelity, Care and Diligence, to the Conviction of Gainsayers, and approving yourself to the Consciences of true Believers. I give this as my final Charge, that you may attend to it after I am dead and gone, and can no longer advise you, or help forward the Work of the Lord with you.

6 *For I am now ready to be offered, and the Time of my Departure is at hand.*

6. For, to allude to the *Jewish* Libations, or pouring out of the Wine upon their Sacrifices, (See the Paraphrase on *Phil.* ii. 17.) I am just on the Point of pouring out my Blood as a Martyr for Christ, and (ἤδη σπένδομαι) am already willing to be offered up, as a Sacrifice, not of Atonement, which Christ has perfectly made by the one Offering of himself; but of Acknowledgment, to the Glory of God, and the Confirmation of the Gospel, which I am going to seal with my Blood; * and I am fully assured, that the Time

* The Apostle speaks with Confidence of his *Departure*, as *at hand*, and might be fully satisfied, either by immediate Revelation, or by what he had observed of *Nero*'s Temper and Behaviour in his first Apology, *ver.* 16, or had heard since, that he would be condemned to Death, when he should be called forth to take his second Trial.

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of my Dissolution, (ἀναλύσεως;) when my Soul will depart from the Body, and from Earth to Heaven, to be ever with the Lord, and when my Body shall be dissolved into its original Dust, is so near and certain, that it may be considered as if it were actually come to pass.

7 *I have fought a good Fight, I have finished* my *Course, I have kept the Faith.*

7. In this Situation I can look backwards and forward with the greatest Pleasure: In a *Review* of what the Grace of God has done for me, and by me, I have the comfortable Witness of his Spirit and of my own Conscience, that I have been enabled, in a good Degree, to war the best of Warfares, in the best Cause, even in the Cause of Christ, against all his, my own and the Church's spiritual Enemies; and to behave like a good Combatant against them, and like a good Soldier of Jesus Christ, with Courage, Fidelity and Success, in fighting his Battles, under his Banner, as the Captain of Salvation: * I have held on my Way thro' all the Trials, Labours and Difficulties, that I have been called to, as a Minister and a Christian; have run with Patience the Race that was set before me; and have now in a Manner compleated my Course of Life and Obedience, Sufferings and Services; and am got just to the Goal: And from the Beginning to the End of this Combat and Race, I have maintain'd the Purity of the Doctrines of what may be emphatically called *the Faith*, (See *Jude*, ver. 3,) have lived by Faith upon them, and been faithful in professing, publishing and defending them, and living answerable to them, for the Glory of God, and the Good of my own and others Souls, *ver.* 8.

8 *Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that Day: And not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*

8. And the rich Experience I have had of the Grace of God, which has been with me, to assist, animate and succeed my Labours, all along, to the very close of Life, (1 *Cor.* xv. 10.) raises my joyful Hope and Confidence, in *looking forward*, that what now remains is to receive the Prize of the high Calling of God, (*Phil.* iii. 14.) which is laid up in Christ, and reserved in Heaven for me; even a glorious *Crown of Life that fadeth not away*, (James i. 12. and 1 *Peter* i. 4. and v. 4.) and is infinitely superior, in Worth and Dignity, to all the withering Garlands and Crowns of earthly Conquerors; and may be called a Crown of *Righteousness*, as 'tis given, on Account of the Redeemer's Merit, only to righteous Persons, and consists in the Perfection of all Righteousness and true Holiness, which I shall be made Partaker of by the free Gift of the Lord Jesus Christ, the impartial Judge of all, who proceeds upon Principles of Righteousness, in Fidelity to his Promises, and in making his Rewards of Grace, as well as of Justice,

* The Terms used in this and the next Passage are *agonistical*, in Allusion to the Combats and Races in the *Grecian* Games: But as the Life of Ministers and Christians is often compared to a *Warfare*, and the Apostle had directed *Timothy* to *endure Hardness* as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ, *Chap.* ii. 3, I have considered the first Clause of this Verse in that Allusion also.

according to the Rule of his Word, by sentencing impenitent Sinners to everlasting Punishment for their Iniquities, and true Believers to everlasting Life for his own Righteousness Sake, at the great Day of his coming to judge the Quick and the Dead: (*ver.* 1) And he will give this glorious Crown, not merely to me, as if no others were to be crowned besides me; but be assured, for the Encouragement of your own Soul, and of all his faithful Followers and Servants, that he will certainly do the same to every one, that realizes by Faith, and with Pleasure, and suitable Preparation, waits, looks, longs and hopes for his second illustrious appearing, *when he will come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe.* (2 Thess. i. 10.)

9 Do thy Diligence to come shortly unto me.

9. In the mean while, lest it be soon too late, Make all possible Haste in coming to me, who greatly want to impart some further Instructions to you, and should be much comforted to see you, as being now in a Manner alone.

10 For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present World, and is departed unto Thessalonica: Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

10. For *Demas*, who has been a Fellow-Labourer, and might have been of Service to me in my present difficult Circumstances, has shamefully deserted me; he being afraid to run any Risk in owning and standing by me, through too great a Love of the Ease, Honour, Safety and Accommodations of this present insnaring World; and he of his own Head, under the Power of Temptation, has retired to *Thessalonica*, the Metropolis of *Macedonia*, where he hopes to get out of the Danger he would be exposed to here §; *Crescens* is gone, with my Approbation, on important Affairs, to *Galatia*, as *Titus* also is to *Dalmatia*.

11 Only Luke is with me. Take Mark and bring him with thee: For he is profitable to me for the Ministry.

11. *Luke*, the beloved Physician, (*Col.* iv. 14) is the only Fellow-Labourer that remains, and chooses to be with me, and assistant to me: And as I should be glad to have the Company of some other faithful Brethren, I desire that when you come, according to my Expectation and Hope, you would bring *Mark* along with you; (See the Note on *Col.* iv. 10) for he may be of great Service to me, in going on Messages, and subserving my ministerial Work, the little Time I may have to live.

§ The Apostle calls *Demas* his *Fellow-Labourer*, (Philem. *ver.* 24) and speaks of his joining in a Salutation with *Luke* the beloved Physician; (*Col.* iv. 14.) He therefore appears to have been a Minister of some Esteem formerly with the Apostle, but a Man of so timorous and worldly a Spirit, as to forsake him in his difficult Circumstance, under an Apprehension of Danger to himself, as the Disciples did our Lord in the Time of his Extremity: However, we cannot certainly conclude concerning him, any more than concerning them, that he turned utter Apostate, though he, as well as they, acted a most unbecoming, unworthy and criminal Part, under the Power of Temptation, and of too strong an Attachment to this Life and its Concerns; accordingly the Apostle sets a black Mark upon him, in Distinction from *Crescens* and *Titus*, of whom he only says, they were gone, one to *Galatia*, a Province of the Lesser *Asia*, and the other to *Dalmatia*, a Country in the southern Part of *Illyricum*; (See the Note on *Rom.* xv. 1) to which Places he probably had sent them on some Messages, or other Business of considerable Consequence. Who *Crescens* was is quite uncertain, we having no other Account of him: But as he is here mentioned just in the same Manner with *Titus*, 'tis probable he was a Minister, and stood well in the Apostle's Esteem.

12 *And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.*

12. I greatly need his, as well as your Assistance*; for I have lately dispatched *Tychicus*, on urgent Occasions, to my Friends at *Ephesus*; and I dearly miss his Company, who is a beloved Brother, and a faithful Minister in the Lord, (*Ephes.* vi. 21) and whom I have often sent on Errands to various Persons and Churches, when I could not be with them myself. (*Acts* xx. 4, 5, *Col.* iv. 7, and *Tit.* iii. 12.)

13 *The Cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring* with thee, *and the Books,* but *especially the Parchments.*

13. The Cloke which I left, when I was last at *Troas*, with our Friend *Carpus*, might be of good Use to me here †; therefore I beg you would take care to bring it with you, when you come to me, as also the several Books which I left there; but, above all, fail not to bring the important Parchments, that are also in his Custody.

14 *Alexander the Coppersmith did me much Evil: The Lord reward him according to his Works.*

14. *Alexander* the infamous Coppersmith, has been my bitter Enemy; a most malicious Instrument, who has falsly accused, and been very injurious to me. (See the Notes on *Acts* xix. 33, and 1 *Tim.* i. 20.) I leave him, as an utter and irreclaimable Apostate, to the righteous Judgment of God ‖, who will call him to a severe Account, and recompense Tribulation to him, according to the just Desert of his evil Deeds, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven to take Vengeance on all his Enemies and impenitent Unbelievers. (2 *Thess.* i. 6—9.)

15 *Of whom be thou ware also; for*

15. I would therefore warn you to have a watchful Eye, as I have had, upon that Man. Avoid him as an excommu-

* The Particle (δὲ) here render'd *and*, is sometimes causal, and translated *for*, as in *Luke* xii. 48, *Acts* vii. 25, 1 *Thess.* ii. 16, and 1 *Tim.* iii. 5; and thus I think it may be taken in this Place, as assigning a further Reason of *Paul*'s desiring *Mark*, as well as *Timothy* to come to him; or, perhaps, he sent *Tychicus* to *Ephesus* to supply *Timothy*'s Place, when he should come to *Rome*.

† I have taken the Word (φαιλόνην) in the Sense of our Translators, to mean *a Cloke*, which might be, either the *Pallium*, that belonged to the Apostle, as a *Roman*-Citizen; or an upper Garment, which he usually wore at inclement Seasons, and would need in a cold Prison, as the Winter was coming on: Others take this Word to signify *a Roll*, and others a *Bag*, *Book-case*, *Box*, or *Chest*, or some Repository, in which *Paul*'s Books and Parchments were kept. And as the Antients had two Sorts of Books, one in the Form of Leaves and Pages of Parchment, or of Paper made of the *Egyptian Papyrus*; and the other of like Materials rolled up when laid aside, and unrolled when opened for Use, The *Books* here mentioned seem to have been *the first*, and *Parchments the second* of these Sorts of Books, which, because rolled up, were called *Volumes*. What was contained in them is both a curious and fruitless Enquiry, that neither needs, nor can be satisfied: But as the Apostle laid so particular an Emphasis on the *Parchments*, some have conjectured, that they might be the Volumes of the Old-Testament; others, the Copy of his Freedom as a *Roman*, which might have been of Use to him in his Trial; others, the Originals of the Epistles, that he had sent to, or received from several Churches, which he would leave in *Timothy*'s Custody. The Apostle therefore order'd him to bring these Things, that then lay in the Hands of *Carpus* at *Troas*. As this is the only Place, where *Carpus* is mentioned, we know little of his Character; But he seems to have been the Apostle's Host at *Troas*, and a faithful Brother, in whom he placed so much Confidence, as to leave Things, for which he had so great a Value, under his Care.

‖ The Apostle probably knew by immediate Revelation, that *Alexander* was a malicious, obstinate and incorrigible Enemy to Christianity, whom God had given up to Hardness of Heart; and therefore if he imprecated a due Reward of his Iniquity upon him, that is no Rule for us to do the like on Persons, of whom we can't have the same Assurance: But some good Copies read *the Lord* (ἀποδώσει) *will reward him according to his Works*; (Vid. Mill. in Loc.) and so 'tis to be consider'd, not as an Imprecation, much less as what the Apostle desired; but a *Prediction* of what would certainly befall him.

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he hath greatly withstood our Words.

nicated Person; (1 *Tim.* i. 20) and take heed lest he serve you and others of the Servants and People of God, as basely as he has me: For he has virulently set himself against, and stiffly opposed the Gospel of Salvation, which I and you preach to all Sorts of Sinners, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, through Faith in Christ Jesus.

16 *At my first Answer no Man stood with me, but all* Men *forsook me:* I pray God *that it may not be laid to their Charge.*

16. When I was brought upon my first Trial, and then made my Apology, (απολογια) in Defence of Christ's and my own Cause before the Emperor, none of my Christian-Acquaintance, that were capable of being any way serviceable to me, had Courage enough to own and countenance me, or to appear as Witnesses on my Behalf; but they all, through Infirmity, Cowardice, or Fear of Suffering, forsook me, as the Disciples of our Lord did him, when he was apprehended in order to his being try'd, condemn'd and crucify'd. (*Mat.* xxvi. 56.) I heartily wish, and earnestly pray, that, as he graciously forgave them, and brought them to Repentance, he would forgive and recover these my Brethren, and not impute this Iniquity to them, or deal with them according to its Deserts. (See the Note on *ver.* 10.)

17 *Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the Preaching might be fully known, and* that *all the Gentiles might hear: And I was delivered out of the Mouth of the Lion.*

17. However, while they through Weakness and Fear were permitted to desert me, the Lord Jesus himself, my almighty fast Friend, who is infinitely better than they all, owned and appeared for me, as his Servant, and strengthned me with Might by his Spirit in the inner Man, to carry me above the Fear of Sufferings and Death: And he was Mouth and Wisdom to me, to enable me to speak boldly for him in the Face of his and my most powerful Adversaries, that, by my Apology at *Cesar*'s Bar, the Tenor of my preaching the Gospel might be thoroughly laid open to the whole Court; and it might be thereby evident to all around me, that it has no ill Tendency for disturbing the Civil Government; and that my having preached it with so great Success was not by human Aid, but by the Power of God, as divinely assisting me, and giving the Increase; (1 *Cor.* iii. 6, 7) and particularly that all the *Gentiles*, then present, might have an Opportunity of hearing the glad Tidings of Salvation by Jesus Christ, as sent unto them: And I was, at that Time, as wonderfully preserved from imminent Danger, as if I had been snatched out of the Mouth of a Lion; (See *Ps.* xxii. 21) and was delivered from the Rage and Cruelty of *Nero* and his Agents, who like a roaring Lion, under the Influence of their Father the Devil, sought to devour and destroy me. (*John* viii. 44, and 1 *Pet.* v. 8.)

18 *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil Work, and will preserve* me *unto his heavenly Kingdom: To whom* be *Glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

18. And I am abundantly encouraged by his Word, and the great Experience I have had of his Love and Care thus far, to trust with an intire Confidence in his Power, Faithfulness and Grace, that he will keep me from doing any thing unworthy the Christian, or the Minister, to save my Life, or to get rid of the hottest Persecutions and Terrors

rors of mine Enemies *; and that, whatever befalls me in my Bonds, and in the Issues of them, as to this World, he will do what is best for me, and will effectually secure me from Apostacy, and from doing any iniquitous Thing to his Dishonour, and will enable me to persevere with Faith and Patience, and continue faithful to the Death, till he shall receive me to live with him in the immortal Dignity, Grandeur and Delights of his heavenly Kingdom: To whom I cheerfully ascribe all possible Honour and Glory for what he is in himself, and has been, and will be to me; To him it justly belongs, and ought to be paid henceforth and for ever more, *Amen*. So let it be; and so I am confident it will be.

19 *Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the Houshold of Onesiphorus.*

19. To draw towards a Conclusion, I, as an aged dying Friend and Apostle, send all religious Salutations to the eminently godly and benevolent *Priscilla* and *Aquila*, who are an Honour to the Christian-Character, in the conjugal Relation of Wife and Husband. (See the Notes on *Acts* xviii. 26, and *Rom.* xvi. 3) I also send the same to the pious Family of *Onesiphorus*, who I know is absent from home; and therefore don't send in like Manner to him. (See the Note on *Chap.* i. 16.)

20 *Erastus abode at Corinth: But Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.*

20. Nor do I to *Erastus*, the Chamberlain of the City, (See the Note on *Rom.* xvi. 33) who I also know is not in your Parts, but tarried at *Corinth*: Nor is *Trophimus* with you, whom I left sick at *Miletus* in *Crete*, when I came from thence; and though I was heartily concern'd for him, I had no Suggestion, or Power communicated to me, to work a Miracle in healing him. (See the Note on *Philip* ii. 27.) Such is my Affection to all these absent Persons, that, were they near you, I should desire you to salute them also in my Name.

21 *Do thy Diligence to come before Winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the Brethren.*

21. As no Time is to be lost, and Travelling will be incommodious at inclement Seasons, I earnestly intreat you to try your utmost to get to me before the Winter comes on. Our Christian-Friend and Brother *Eubulus* sends his affectionate Respects to you, as also do *Pudens* and *Linus*, and *Claudia*, and indeed all our Brethren in Christ, that are in these Parts, and know of my writing to you.

22 *The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy Spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.*

22. My own Heart's Desire for you is, that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ may be ever with your Spirit, to guide, support, strengthen, comfort and sanctify you. And my Benediction to all the Saints, together with you, is, May his free Love or Favour, and a sweet Sense of it in all its

* The Apostle can't be supposed here to mean, that the Lord would deliver him from Sufferings unto Death, because he had said, with an Assurance of his dying a Martyr, that *the Time of his Departure was at Hand*: (ver. 6) But he was confident that the Lord would deliver him from doing any sinful, unbecoming Thing, contrary to Faith and a good Conscience, to preserve his Life, or escape Sufferings for Christ.

precious

precious Fruits and Effects, continually abound towards all and every one of you. (ὑμῶν) In Testimony of my Desire and Hope of this, I say, *Amen.*

RECOLLECTIONS.

What Need have Ministers and others to be excited to their Duty, in serious Reflections on that awful Day, when Christ will come in all the Majesty and Glory of his Kingdom to judge the whole World, Quick and Dead, who must then give an Account of themselves, and of all that they have done in the Body to him! Great are the Difficulties of fulfilling the Ministerial Charge, in which Christ's Servants are called to watch, and endure Hardships; to preach the pure Word of God in the whole Compass of it, on all proper Occasion, for the great Purposes of Instruction, Rebuke, Comfort and Exhortation, with all Long-suffering and Patience, under the Neglect of Friends, and Opposition of Enemies. But, blessed be God, the Encouragements of those, that desire to be faithful, are exceeding great. Though all Men should forsake them, the Lord Jesus himself will stand by them; will assist and own them in their Work; will appear for them in their Tribulations; will keep them from choosing Sin, rather than Sufferings; will ordinarily give them delightful Reflections, at the close of Life, on the Grace that has enabled them to fight the good Fight of Faith; and will preserve them to his heavenly Kingdom, and crown them, as Conquerors, at the End of their Race and Warfare, by an Act of Righteousness on his own Account, and of Faithfulness to his Word, as well as of Mercy to them, at the great Day. But, alas! How many are there, who sit under the Ministry of the Gospel, that can't bear, but are sway'd by the Pride, Corruption and Vanity of their own Minds, to renounce the Truth and Holiness of sound Doctrine, and to follow every Novelty and new Preacher, that please the Fancy, instead of profiting their Souls! How many others are there, that one would hope to be good People, who, like *Demas* and other Professors, are too much in Love with Life and the Concerns of it, and so weak in Faith, and so much under the Power of Temptation, as to be afraid and ashamed to appear openly for Christ, and for his most eminent Servants, in Times of Danger! The good Lord pardon all such, and recover them to a better and more courageous Spirit! But as to those apparently malicious, obstinate and incorrigible Enemies to Christ, and to ourselves for his Sake, there is little or no Room to hope, but that he will reward them according to the due Desert of their wicked Works: In the mean while we ought to be upon our Guard against them, lest we be injured by them in our religious Principles, Manners and Views. But O happy Souls! that sincerely and affectionately love Christ, and rejoice in the Thoughts of his one Day appearing, like himself, in all his Glory, and that testify their Love to him in doing all they can to promote his Cause. They, as well as his ministring Servants, shall receive the Crown of Life in the Day of Judgment. With what cordial Affection then should they greet one another, as Christian-Brethren! And how earnestly wish and pray, that the Lord may be with their Spirits; and that his Grace, which is sufficient for them, may be manifested to and in them, and perform all Things for them! In like Returns of brotherly Love, Let every one say, *Amen.*

A PRAC-

A PRACTICAL

EXPOSITION

OF THE

EPISTLE of the Apostle *PAUL* to *TITUS*.

In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The PREFACE to the Epistle to *TITUS*.

THIS Epistle to *Titus* is most generally thought to have been wrote after the *First*, and before the *Second* to *Timothy*; tho' *they* (being wrote to the same Person) are put together in the Collection of the sacred Canon. *They* were form'd for the Direction of *Timothy*, and *this* of *Titus*, as Evangelists, that were assistant to the Apostle, and watered the Churches, which he had planted; and therefore the Tenor and Stile (as was to be expected) are much alike in this and those, especially *the First* of them, which cast a good deal of Light upon one another; and are worthy the serious Attention of all the Ministers of the Gospel, and New Testament-Churches of every Age, for whose Use they were ultimately design'd, as far as there might be any thing common, or similar, in their respective Circumstances.

Titus was an early *Gentile*-Convert, (*Gal.* ii. 3), probably under the Apostle *Paul*'s Ministry, who, in Language, like that to *Timothy*, calls him *his own Son in the common Faith*: (Chap. i. 4.) And having for a considerable Time tried, and found him to be diligent and faithful in the Improvement of the spiritual Gifts, that were communicated to him, in all Likelihood by the Imposition of the Apostle's own Hands, he at length advanced him from the State of a private Christian, or ordinary Minister, to the high Rank of an Evangelist; and left the Care of the Churches to him at *Crete*, that had been planted in several of its Towns, or Cities, by the Apostle himself.

The particular *Time* of the Conversion of the *Cretians*, and of the Apostle's leaving *Titus* with them, which is referred to, *Chap.* i. 5, and in what *particular Year* of our Lord, as also *from whence*, and by what *Messenger*, this Epistle was

 sent,

sent, is variously disputed by the Learned, with great Uncertainty; and, as far as I see, to little Profit: But it appears, from *Chap.* i. 5, and iii. 12, to be past Dispute, that it was wrote by the Apostle *Paul* to *Titus*, while he was at Liberty, and *Titus* was doing the Work of an Evangelist at *Crete*, which is all that is necessary for establishing our Belief of its divine Authority.

Crete, which is now called *Candia* from the Name of its principal City, and is under the Dominion of the *Turks*, is one of the finest Islands for Size, Air and Soil in the *Mediterranean*; but its antient Natives were infamous to a Proverb for *Lying*, and were much addicted to several other Vices, according to the Account that *Epimenides*, one of their own celebrated Poets, gave of them, which the Apostle recites, and calls a true one, *Chap.* i. 12. And as there were very active Judaizing Christians among the Converts of this Island, 'Tis not much to be wonder'd at, that a People of so bad a *Constitutional* Temper, and so *lately* brought to the Faith of Christ, were in Danger of being insnared by their artful Insinuations: And as too many of them had been perverted by their Means, and Adversaries to the pure Gospel were still very busy among them, the Apostle sent this Epistle to furnish *Titus* with some farther Directions how to behave in that critical Situation, than he had given while he was with him, and before any Thing of that Kind had appeared among them.

After the Introduction, in which he attests his own Apostolic Authority to give a divine Sanction to what he wrote, rather for obviating Objections to *Titus*'s acting according to it, than for his own Satisfaction, who could have no Doubt about it; he reminds him, that the chief Design of his leaving him at *Crete* was to carry on the begun Work of God, and ordain faithful and able Pastors of the Churches there, whose Qualifications he describes much in the same Manner, as in 1 *Tim.* iii. 2—7, and whose Assistance would be needful to confute the Judaizing Deceivers, that were labouring to corrupt the Faith and Holiness of the Gospel. *Chap.* i. Then, in Opposition to those Sticklers for ceremonial Rites, he advises *Titus* to preach with such Authority in the Name of Christ, as should raise him above Contempt; and to recommend, by his own Example, such a religious and moral Behaviour of younger and older Believers of both Sexes, as, suitable to their respective Ages, might be becoming sound Doctrine, and Persons professing Godliness: And, in Opposition to those, that would cancel the Obligation of Christian-Servants to their unbelieving Masters, he bids him exhort them to behave with Good-humour and Faithfulness, in fulfilling the Duties of their Relation to them, for the Credit of the Gospel, which teaches all Holiness in every Station of Life, and encourages the Practice of it by the joyful Hopes of perfect Happiness at Christ's glorious appearing; and shews that the very End of his Redemption was to purify to himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works, *Chap.* ii. And, in Opposition to those, that were for paying no Regard to Heathen-Magistrates, he recommends it to *Titus*, to remind all Sorts of professing Christians of their Obligations to be obedient to their Civil Governors; to be ready to every good Work; to be inoffensive and courteous toward People of all Ranks and Characters; and enforces this from Considerations of what they themselves were in their natural State, and of the happy Change, that was made upon them, by the regenerating Grace of the Holy Spirit, and their Justification to Eternal Life. These *Titus* was to insist upon, as the most powerful and evangelical Motives to Believers to act up to Character, in practising every Thing, that is good in itself, and useful to others; and was to avoid the empty, vain-jangling Disputes of Judaizers, and to reject self-condemn'd Heretics, after a

first

first and second Admonition. Having now finished the main Body of his Epistle, he adds an Order for *Titus* to come to him at *Nicopolis*, where he proposed to spend the Winter; and to provide all proper Accommodations for *Zenas* and *Apollos*, whom he was to take in his Way to him: And concludes with a general Exhortation to all the Professors of Christ's Name, to attend to the Duties of their Places; with Salutations to *Titus*, and to their Christian-Friends, and with his Apostolic Benediction to them all. *Chap.* iii.

CHAP. I.

The Apostle asserts his Character, salutes Titus, *and reminds him of the Work, for which he had left him at* Crete, 1—5. *Draws out the Qualifications of a faithful Pastor,* 6—9. *And describes the evil Temper and Practices of judaizing false Teachers, that ought to be confuted,* 10—16.

TEXT.

1 PAUL *a Servant of God, and an Apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the Faith of God's Elect, and the acknowledging of the Truth, which is after Godliness;*

2 *In Hope of eternal Life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the World began,*

PARAPHRASE.

1. PAUL, the inspired Writer of this Epistle, is, and counts it his Honour, as a Christian and a Minister, to be the devoted Servant of the ever-blessed God, under the strictest and most inviolable Bonds to him; and, though utterly unworthy in himself, he is still more highly dignified with the Title and Commission, Qualifications and Powers of an extraordinary Messenger, sent and instructed immediately by Jesus Christ, to bear Witness to him, and preach his Gospel of Salvation, in all its Extent, to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, according to the Doctrine of Faith, which is embraced by, and is the Means of working effectual Faith in, God's own People, whom he originally made so, by his special, distinguishing and eternal Choice; (*Ephes.* i. 4) and according to their Knowledge, Approbation and Confession of its infallible Truth, which is suited, designed and made effectual unto them, for promoting the Principles and Practice of real Godliness in Heart and Life, as consisting of a sincere and devout Performance of all religious Duties, with a holy Reverence, Fear and Adoration of, Trust in, and unreserved Obedience to God, through Jesus Christ.

2. This Truth is believed and professed, with a correspondent Practice of Godliness, by them, in the Exercise of a lively Hope of an incorruptible and undefiled Inheritance of eternal Life, to which God, according to his abundant Mercy, has begotten them; (1 *Pet.* i. 3, 4) and which he, who cannot possibly be false or deceiving, but may as soon cease to be God, as cease to be true and faithful, has promised to Christ their Head for them, and to them, as federally comprehended in him, before the earliest Date of Time, even from all Eternity, before any Dispensations of Grace commenced; and has given a Specimen of, in the

first Promise after the Fall, (*Gen.* iii. 15) before any of the *Jewish* Ages began. (See the Note on 2 *Tim.* i. 9.)

3 But hath in due Times manifested his Word through Preaching, which is committed unto me, according to the Commandment of God our Saviour.

3. But which in the Fulness of Time, according to his eternal Purpose, he has now clearly made known by the Publication of his Gospel, which is revealed, and committed, as a Trust, in a special Manner to me, his Servant and Apostle, (*ver.* 1) to dispense it to the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, according to the express Appointment and Command of our Lord Jesus Christ, (*Acts* xxii. 17—21, and xxvi. 15—18) who is indeed God our Saviour, as by his Incarnation he became Emanuel, God with us, and gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, (*Chap.* ii. 13, 14. See the Note there.)

4 To Titus mine *own Son, after the common Faith: Grace, Mercy, and Peace from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.*

4. I, who am thus divinely inspired and commission'd, send this Epistle to you, my beloved *Titus*, who are as dear to me, as any Child can be to his own Father, and are indeed in a spiritual Sense my genuine Son, as I was the Instrument of begetting you to Christ, and bringing you both to the Doctrine and Grace of Faith in him, which is common to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and to you and me; I heartily wish and pray, that the divine Favour, tender Compassion, and all Manner of Blessings for Time and Eternity, as included in the comprehensive Term *Peace*, may abound toward you from God the Father, as the Fountain of all Good, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Revealer, Purchaser and Giver of it, who, in the Execution of his Office, is emphatically *our Saviour*.

5 For this Cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in Order the Things that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every City, as I had appointed thee.

5. Now, to remind you of the End, for which I told you I left you at *Crete*, when I last came from thence, You know it was, that you might carry on the good Work begun there, and set to rights such Things as are defective, or remain unfinished, with regard to Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Manners, in the Churches which are planted in that Island; and particularly that, in order hereunto, you, as an Evangelist and my Deputy, might preside in solemnly setting apart, and constituting Bishops or Pastors, (*ver* 7. See the Notes on *Acts* xx. 28, and 1 *Pet.* v. 2.) that should be chosen by common Suffrage to reside statedly among, and take the Oversight of the several Churches in every Town, or City, where they are seated; and to feed them with Knowledge and Understanding, (*Jer.* iii. 15) according to the Orders I gave, and in the Manner I prescribed to you, before I took my Leave of you.

6 If any be blameless, the Husband of one Wife, having faithful Children, not accused of Riot, or unruly;

6. As to the Qualifications of a Person, that is fit and worthy to be invested with that Office, He ought to be one of an unspotted Reputation in his moral Character, among his Christian-Acquaintance, and all around him; (1 *Tim.* iii. 27) one that is clear from the Sin of Polygamy, as never being married to more than one Wife at a Time; and of causeless Divorces, according to the corrupt Custom of the

the *Jews*; (See the Note 1 *Tim.* iii. 2) And, if he have Children, See that he be one, who brings them up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord, and manages them with ſuch Prudence and Authority, as, by the Bleſſing of God, may be the Means of winning them over to the Faith of Chriſt, and to a faithful Profeſſion of his Name, and Diſcharge of all the Duties of their civil and religious Relations; and who never ſuffers any of his Children to behave at ſuch a Rate, as ſhall fix upon them a Brand of luxurious and diſſolute, or of refractory, ungovernable and diſobedient Youths, (ανυποτακτα) in their Temper and Manners, to the Diſgrace, not only of themſelves, but of their Fathers, and the Goſpel.

7 For a Biſhop muſt be blameleſs, as the Steward of God; not ſelf-willed, not ſoon angry, not given to Wine, no Striker, not given to filthy Lucre;

7. For the Nature of a Paſtor's or Chriſtian-Biſhop's Office, the Honour of Religion, and the Good of others, as well as of his own Soul, require, that he be under no Reproach or Scandal in his Life and Converſation, or on Account of any Neglect or Unfaithfulneſs in the Diſcharge of his Truſt, as a Steward of the Myſteries of God, to diſpenſe them impartially and without Reſerve, that every one of Chriſt's Family, under his miniſterial Inſpection, may have his Portion in due Seaſon; and he ought not to be of a head-ſtrong, conceited, obſtinate, inflexible Temper; nor one of a haſty Spirit, that takes Fire at every little Provocation, and preſently falls into a Paſſion; nor one that loves, and is addicted to immoderate drinking of ſtrong Liquors; nor contentious and violent in his Behaviour, ready to fall foul upon them that diſpleaſe him; nor one of a nigardly, ſordid, covetous Spirit, that is for getting all he can, and for keeping all he gets of the defiling Pelf of this World; and, like a mercenary Hireling, values the Fleece more than the Flock, and would take no Pains in his Work, were it not for a Proſpect of ſecular Gain to himſelf.

8 But a Lover of Hoſpitality, a Lover of good Men, *ſober, juſt, holy, temperate;*

8. But he ought to be a Man of a liberal Soul, that deviſes liberal Things, and, according to his Ability, takes Pleaſure, on all proper Occaſions, in Acts of Benevolence to religious Strangers, as well as Neighbours and Acquaintance, eſpecially to Miniſters and Chriſtians, that either go about to preach the Goſpel, or are driven from Houſe and Home, by the Violence of Perſecutions. He ought to be a Lover and Encourager of good Things, and to have a cordial Affection to all ſincere, honeſt, good and pious Men, without Exception; and to be himſelf modeſt and humble, grave and prudent, in his Carriage; upright and faithful in all that he ſays and does; exemplarily holy in all Manner of Converſation and Godlineſs; chaſte and moderate in his Deſires, Appetites, and Purſuits of the Pleaſures of this Life.

9. He

9 *Holding fast the faithful Word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound Doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the Gain-sayers.*

9. He likewise ought to be one, that is well establiſhed in the great Truths of the Goſpel, that holds them faſt in his own Faith and Profeſſion of them, and holds them forth in his Miniſtry, and is ſteady in maintaining them, as the true and faithful Sayings of God, which are to be believed and adhered to, juſt according to what he has been taught, and has learn'd from inſpir'd Writers, of *the Faith, which was once delivered to the Saints*, (Jude, *ver.* 3.) that he may be capable of explaining, ſupporting and defending the pure, uncorrupted, wholſome Doctrine of Chriſt; and, by a due and proper Application of it, (παρακαλεῖν) to adminiſter Comfort to Believers, and excite them to their Duty; and to confute the Errors of all Oppoſers, ſilence their Cavils, and rebuke their Perverſeneſs.

10 *For there are many unruly and vain Talkers and Deceivers, especially they of the Circumcision:*

10. For, as in ſeveral other Places, ſo, I underſtand, among the Profeſſors at *Crete*, there are Abundance of Pretenders to Chriſtianity, that are (ἀνυπότακτοι) refractory and diſorderly, not ſubmitting to any divine Rule, in Doctrine or Manners; and they are moſt pernicious, proud, ſelf-conceited Diſputers, with vain Jangling about empty Things, to no good Purpoſe; and crafty, ſly Seducers of the Minds of the Simple; I in a ſpecial Manner have my Eye upon the *Jewiſh* Party among them, that make a Profeſſion of Chriſt, and yet contend for Circumciſion and other Rites of the Law of *Moſes*, as neceſſary to Salvation.

11 *Whose Mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole Houses, teaching Things which they ought not, for filthy Lucre's Sake.*

11. For oppoſing ſuch as theſe, 'Tis highly neceſſary that Paſtors or Chriſtian-Biſhops be able Miniſters of the New Teſtament; and all poſſible fair Means, by ſcriptural Proofs, ſolid Arguments, and good Example, ought to be uſed for confuting and ſilencing thoſe vain Boaſters, and deceitful Workers, who are ſo indefatigable, ſubtle and ſpecious in their Pretences, as to inſinuate themſelves into Chriſtian-Families, (2 *Tim.* iii. 6.) and carry them off, as it were by Wholeſale, from the pure Doctrines of the Goſpel to *Moſes*; urging Things unreaſonably upon them, that are utterly falſe, and abſolutely inconſiſtent with the true Way of Salvation by Chriſt alone; which they do for the Sake of heaping to themſelves the ſordid, defiling Treaſures of this World, by Methods that are ſuited to impoſe upon ſuch an infamous Sort of People, as the *Cretians*,* and that are agreeable to their own Character, as ſuch.

12 *One of themselves,* even *a Prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are al-*

12. For one of their own Countrymen, a celebrated *Greek* Poet, which ſprung from among themſelves, and thoroughly knew their national Temper, even *Epimenides* by Name, whom they eſteem as a Prophet, and who, as *a*

* If, as is very probable, theſe Deceivers themſelves were *Cretians*, the Apoſtle with good Reaſon ſeems to ſuggeſt, that they act like themſelves in all their ſelf-ſeeking and deluſive Arts, and that the People they had to do with, were fit Materials, prepared ready to their Hands, for them to work upon, as appears from the following Account of them.

way Liars, evil Beasts, slow Bellies.

Poet, is customarily called *a Prophet*; He says, in a Description of the Natives of *Crete*, that they are naturally a Set of scandalous People, ever addicted to Falshood and Lying; sly and savage in their Temper, like wild Beasts; perfect Gluttons in indulging their ravenous Appetites, and, as is common for Persons of such a luxurious Turn, exceeding lazy, and backward to every useful Employment, and so exposed to all Sorts of Temptations.

13 *This Witness is true: Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be found in the Faith;*

13. 14. And truly this is a just Testimony against them, as has been proved in numberless Instances, and too plainly appears by the perfidious, mischievous and sensual Management of the Judaizing Christians, and of those that fall in with them, at this very Day: It behoves you therefore to deal plainly and smartly with a People of such a vile and brutish Temper, with whom Mildness will not do; but who must be cut to the Quick, in laying before them their Sin and Danger, with due Severity, that neither the Deceivers, nor the Deceived, may dare any longer to persist in their evil Principles and Practices; but may be recovered to a right Mind, and settled in the true and uncorrupted Doctrines of Faith; and may be so intirely brought over to them, as never more to listen after, attend to, or believe and be carried away with, the fallacious Stories that the *Jews* tell of their Traditions, and with the imperious Injunctions of Men, that are prejudiced against, and gone off from the Truth of the Gospel, and insist on an Observation of ceremonial Rites, such as relate, among others, to Meats and Drinks, and Persons and Things, that were clean or unclean, according to the Distinctions of the Levitical Law; but are no longer obligatory under the New Testament-Dispensation.

14 *Not giving heed to Jewish Fables, and Commandments of Men, that turn from the Truth.*

15 *Unto the Pure all Things* are *pure: But unto them that are defiled, and unbelieving,* is *nothing pure; but even their Mind and Conscience is defiled.*

15. Unto real Christians, whose Hearts are purified by Faith, and Consciences purged by the Blood of Christ, all Things, that God hath not forbidden under the Gospel-State, may be lawfully esteemed clean, and may be touched and eat, without the least moral Defilement; and they have a sanctified Use of them: But unto those, that are unregenerated, and under the Power of Sin, and of Unbelief with respect to Gospel-Truths, and that adhere to Mosaical Institutions, instead of cleaving to Christ alone; Unto such, whatever their Pretences be to Christianity, nothing, no, not Things that are most lawful and good in themselves, can be clean and pure; nor can they use them without Sin and Defilement; the Reason of which is, because even their Understandings and Consciences themselves, those leading and directive Powers of the Soul, are sadly misguided and corrupted.

16 *They profess that they know God; but in Works they deny* him, *being*

16. They indeed make high Professions, and boast of their Knowledge of the true God, and of the Revelation of his Mind and Will, as though they herein excelled all others; (*Rom.* ii. 17—20.) But their Practices are a direct Contradiction

abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good Work reprobate.

Contradiction to, and Confutation of all such Pretences; They, in effect, deny by their Deeds, what they affirm in Words; being, in reality, most detestable Enemies to God, and Godliness; and, giving no Credit to the Gospel-Revelation, they are disobedient to his Authority in it, and utterly injudicious, and unapt for the Performance of any good Work; and so are highly disapproved of God, and *reprobate Silver shall Men call them; because the Lord hath rejected them.* (Jer. vi. 30. See the Note on 2 *Cor.* xiii. 5.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

With what Readiness of Mind, and Sense of Duty, should Ministers and private Christians, in their respective Places, pay a conscientious Regard to the inspired Directions of the great Apostle of the *Gentiles*, whose Authority is divine, and whose benevolent Wishes were for Grace, Mercy and Peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ! How much soever others may despise, or corrupt the Gospel, God's Elect will embrace and own it, as calculated, and render'd effectual in them, for promoting the Practice of Godliness: And when they experience its holy Effects upon themselves, What a Support is it to their Hope of everlasting Life, which the unchangeably faithful and true God promised to Christ for them, and to them in him, before all Worlds; and has now made known with the clearest Evidence, in the Gospel-Revelation, and by the Ministry of it! With what cautious Care, and Attention to due Qualifications, should they proceed, who are engaged in setting Persons apart to the Pastoral Office in the Churches of Christ, according to Apostolical Appointment! And how concerned should such Pastors themselves be, that their moral Characters be clear; that, if they are married, it be but to one Wife at a Time; and that the Children, which God may give them, be orderly, and trained up in the Faith of Christ, and not chargeable with Riots, or refractory Disobedince; that they themselves be neither humoursomly obstinate, nor passionate, nor litigious, nor Tiplers, nor covetous; but generous and hospitable; Lovers of all good Men, and of every good Thing; grave and prudent, just and righteous toward Men, holy and religious toward God, chaste and temperate in all Things; and that they hold fast the true Doctrine of Christ in their Faith, Profession and Preaching, just as they received it from him and his Apostles; and be such Masters of it, as to be able to maintain and defend it against all Opposition, and to apply it for Duty and Comfort, like good Stewards of the Houshold of Faith! With what Diligence should they endeavour, not by Force, but by Scripture and Reason, to silence obstinate, self-conceited vain Boasters and Deceivers, that turn away from the Truth, and pervert Multitudes by their false Notions, to enrich themselves with sordid and defiling Gains! And with what just Severity (when milder Methods fail) should they reprove such Professors, as, like the *Cretians*, are perfidious, brutish, luxurious and idle, that they may be brought to reject all fabulous Traditions, and Impositions of Men upon Conscience, and may be found in the Faith! Ah! How wretched is the Case of Formalists in Religion, who are neither cleansed from their Sins, nor have true Faith in Christ; whose evil Practices contradict their verbal Professions, and proud Boasts of superior Knowledge of God, and of his Mind and Will! They, at the same Time, are odious in his Sight, as their Minds and Consciences are defiled, and as they neither believe nor obey the Gospel-Revelation, and are utterly void of Judgment, and of holy Dispositions for any good Work. But what a Mercy is it to be pure and upright in Heart, through the cleansing Virtue of the Blood and Spirit of Jesus! To Persons of the *former* Character, every Thing is defiling; but to those of the *latter*, all lawful Things are sanctified for their Use, and may be improved to the Glory of God, and the Good of their own Souls.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The Apostle directs Titus *to inculcate such Duties upon younger and older Christians, as are becoming sound Doctrine, and to be exemplary in them himself,* 1—8. *To enjoin believing Servants to be obedient to their Masters for the Honour of the Doctrine of Christ, which they profess,* 9, 10. *And to enforce all this from a Consideration of the holy Design of the Gospel, from the Prospect it gives of heavenly Glory, and from the End of Christ's Death, which equally concern Believers of all Ranks and Stations, and are to be urged upon them with all becoming Authority,* 11—15.

TEXT.

1 BUT *speak thou the Things which become sound Doctrine:*

2 *That the aged Men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in Faith, in Charity, in Patience:*

3 *The aged Women likewise, that* they be *in Behaviour as becometh Holiness, not false Accusers, not given to much Wine,*

PARAPHRASE.

1. MANY are the deluding and deluded People of corrupt Minds and Manners, that surround you, which have been spoken of; (*Chap.* i. 10—16.) But, in Opposition to them, let it be your special Care to preach and insist upon such Doctrines and Duties, as are agreeable to, and put an Honour upon the solid, pure, wholsome and healing Gospel of Christ, which is a Doctrine according to Godliness, (*Chap.* i. 1. and 1 *Tim.* vi. 3.) and lays the highest Obligations to Holiness and Obedience upon all its Professors, of what Age, Sex, or Station soever they be.

2. Put the more elderly Christian-Brethren in Mind, that, suitable to their Age and Profession, they ought to be (νηφαλιους) very watchful, circumspect and sedate in their Temper and Carriage; to behave with a venerable Gravity (σεμνους) and due Decorum in their Dress, Mien and Air, and in all that they say and do; to be prudent (σωφρονας) in their Conduct, and temperate in eating and drinking; uncorrupt, as to the Doctrines of Faith, and sincere in believing them, and living answerable to them; abounding in Love to God, in cordial Affection to all the Saints for his Sake, and in Christian-Benevolence to People of all Nations, Ranks and Characters, as Fellow-Creatures; and to be patient under Tribulations and Offences, and in subduing their own peevish Passions, and bearing with the Infirmities of others. *

3. Inculcate also upon religious elderly Women, that they ought to be exemplary (ἐν καταστηματι) in Dress, and all regular Deportment, as becomes such holy Professors; and to take great heed that they be not, like the Devil himself, (διαβολους) false Accusers, Slanderers, or Backbiters of others, to the Injury of their Reputation; nor inclined, much less

* Some have thought that *aged* Men and Women, in this and the next Verse, are meant of *Church-Officers*, such as *Elders* and *Deaconesses*: But as *young Men* and *Women*, and not private Christians, are mentioned by way of Distinction from them, *ver.* 4, 5, 6, the Context determines the Reference to *elderly Persons*, as *Superiors*; and *Elders in Office* had been described in the preceding Chapter.

Teachers of good Things;

given up, to any Excess of drinking Wine, or other intoxicating Liquors, under Pretence of recruiting the Strength and Spirits of decaying Nature; and that, instead of amusing young People with old Wives Fables, (1 *Tim.* iv. 7.) they should entertain them with profitable Discourse, and recommend by Counsel and Example every Thing, that is good and laudable, as to Speech, Apparel and Behaviour:

4 That they may teach the young Women to be sober, to love their Husbands, to love their Children,

4, 5. Particularly, that they should instruct, and endeavour to influence, younger Women to be wise, and cautious of every Thing that savours of Lewdness or Lightness; and, if they be married, to carry themselves in an affectionate and endearing Manner toward their Husbands, being in Heart for them, and for no other Man; and, according to the Dictates of Natnre and Religion, to be concerned for the Happiness of such Children, as God may graciously give them, and to show their Love to them, not with a foolish Fondness, to the Neglect of needful Reproof, or Corrections for their Faults, as there may be Occasion, which, in Effect, would be hating, instead of loving them; (*Prov.* iii. 24, and xxiii. 13, 14.) but with a prudent, solid, Christian-like Tenderness and Kindness, to encourage them in every Thing that is good, and to do all that in them lies for their temporal, spiritual and eternal Welfare; As also to manage every Thing with Discretion; to be modest and virtuous with all Purity of Manners; to be careful and industrious Housewives, not gadding about like idle Busybodies, (1 *Tim.* v. 13.) but keeping as much as may be at home, and minding the Affairs of their Families; to be meek and good-temper'd toward their Servants, and all they have to do with; and to pay due Respect and Obedience, in all lawful Things, to their Husbands, that they may never give the least Occasion for any to speak reproachfully of the Word or Ways of God, as though these encouraged any disorderly Practice.

5 To be *discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own Husbands, that the Word of God be not blasphemed.*

6 Young Men likewise exhort to be sober-minded.

6. In like Manner, advise and excite young Men, professing Christianity, to be considerate, chaste, meek and sober; and to maintain a due Government of their Temper and Passions, which are apt to be too warm and impetuous, rash, proud, wilful and frolicksome, at their blooming Age.

7 In all Things shewing thyself a Pattern of good Works: In Doctrine shewing *Uncorruptness, Gravity, Sincerity,*

8 Sound Speech that cannot be condemned;

7, 8. And if you would have these Things believed and practised by others, Be especially careful to draw them out to the Life, and recommend them in your own Behaviour, by being yourself an exact Pattern of every Thing, that is good and excellent in itself, and beneficial to Men: And, in all your Preaching, deliver nothing but the pure, unmix'd Doctrine of Christ, with disinterested single Aims at the Glory of God and the Good of Souls; with becoming Seriousness and venerable Gravity; and with all Simplicity and godly Sincerity; and in such scriptural, easy and significant Language, as is suited to convey your Ideas in a plain,

that he that is of the contrary Part, may be ashamed, having no evil Thing to say of you.

plain, determinate Meaning, according to the Truth of the Gospel; and as shall neither mislead your Hearers, nor be justly objected to, either for its Ambiguity, Obscurity, or Falshood; that so your most critical, carping and cavilling Enemies may even blush and be confounded, as finding that there is no room for the Reproaches, and invidious Charges of Error in Doctrine, or Misdemeanor in Practice, which they were endeavouring to fasten upon you, and your Followers.

9 Exhort *Servants to be obedient unto their own Masters,* and *to please* them *well in all Things; not answering again,*

9. And whereas there are some Judaizers, who would persuade such converted Slaves, as are the Property of Heathen-Masters, that 'tis not lawful for them to continue in their Service, You ought to guard against such an Incroachment on civil Rights; and press upon all believing Servants, whether Slaves or others, the Duty of continuing, as much as ever, and upon better Principles than ever before, to be obedient in all lawful Things to their earthly Masters, *not only to the Good and Gentle, but also to the Froward;* (1 Pet. ii. 18.) and to endeavour to behave in such a courteous, obliging and diligent Manner, as shall win their Favour, and give them a great deal of Pleasure in seeing all their just and reasonable Commands executed: And exhort Servants to be so well satisfied with their Station and the Duties of it, as cheerfully to attend to them, without murmuring, or disputing against them, or returning rude and saucy Answers, when they are ordered to do any Thing they don't like, or are reproved for their Faults.

10 *Not purloining, but shewing all good Fidelity; that they may adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour in all Things.*

10. And charge them to be strictly just and honest; (See *Ephes.* vi. 5, 6. and *Col.* iii. 22, 23.) never daring to waste, embezzle, or secrete to their own Use, any of their Master's Goods, Money, or Provisions, beyond his Allowance of what is fit and needful for them; but always to be approving themselves, as good and faithful Servants, that punctually obey his Orders, and do the best they can for his Honour and Advantage, like Persons that make his Interest their own; (ἵνα) to the End that they may be a Credit to the Gospel, and to their holy Profession of it, and may thereby strike Conviction upon the Consciences of their Infidel Masters themselves, as well as others, of the Excellency, Purity and Power of the Doctrine of the blessed God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ, (*ver.* 13. See the Note there) with regard to all civil and moral, as well as religious Duties, in every Relation of Life.

11 *For the Grace of God that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all Men;*

11. For the Gospel of the Grace of God, particularly under the New Testament-Dispensation of it, (*Ephes.* iii. 2.) which is the Effect of his free Favour, and reveals it to us; and is the Means of working Grace in our Hearts, as it brings glad Tidings of Deliverance from Sin and Wrath, and of eternal Happiness through Jesus Christ, and shows the Way of obtaining this great Salvation by Faith in him, has now shone forth in all its Light and Glory, (ἐπεφάνη) like

the riſing Sun, upon all Nations, to whom he ordered it to be preached, (*Mat.* xxviii. 19. and *Mark* xvi. 15.) and upon all Sorts of the ſinful Sons and Daughters of Men, Whether *Jews* or *Heathens*, young or old, Maſters or Servants. (*ver.* 2—9.)

12 *Teaching us, that denying Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent World;*

12. And its great and holy Tendency and Deſign, together with its effectual Working in thoſe of us who believe, is to teach and oblige us, whatever our civil Stations be, that, renouncing, abhorring and utterly forſaking all Infidelity, Idolatry and Impiety of every Kind, contrary to *the firſt Table* of the moral Law; and all irregular Inclinations and Deſires, contrary to *the ſecond Table*, which conſiſt *in the Luſt of the Fleſh, the Luſt of the Eye, and the Pride of Life*, (1 John ii. 16.) and which worldly-minded Men indulge and gratify, and place their Happineſs in; that, abandoning and deteſting all theſe, we ſhould be wiſely careful to lead a Life of Purity and Sanctity, in a due Government of our Paſſions and Appetites; in a juſt, honeſt, equitable and benevolent Behaviour toward Men, doing by them as we would be done by; (*Luke* vi. 31.) and in all Acts of public and private Worſhip and Devotion toward God, according to his Word, in the Exerciſe of every Grace, and Celebration of all his Ordinances, and Obſervation of all his Commandments, as long as we continue in this preſent World of Sin, Temptation and Snares.

13 *Looking for that bleſſed Hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt:*

13. And it teaches, encourages and animates us to do all this, by the moſt conſtraining Motives, as Perſons who look with an Eye of Faith, and wait with earneſt Expectation and longing Deſire, and yet with ſubmiſſive Patience, for the perfect, all-comprehending and everlaſting Felicity of the heavenly State, in the immediate Preſence of Chriſt, which is the great Object of our joyful Hope; and for the illuſtrious appearing of the great and mighty God, (*Iſa.* ix. 6.) * even our dear Lord, Redeemer and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who, at his ſecond Coming without Sin to Salvation, (*Heb.* ix. 28.) will appear on his Throne of Judgment, like himſelf, in all the Majeſty, Beauty, Grandeur

* It ſeems to me, that our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt* is meant by *God our Saviour*, ver. 10, he being, moſt ſtrictly ſpeaking, *the Saviour*, and moſt frequently ſtiled in the New Teſtament *our Saviour*, and very often *God*; and may be conſider'd, as there diſtinguiſhed from God the Father, whoſe Goſpel of Grace is ſaid to have appeared to all Men in the next Verſe: However I am well ſatisfied, that he is meant here by *the great God and*, or as I think it might be better render'd, *even our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*; becauſe the Article in the *Greek* is prefix'd to *the great God*, and not repeated before *our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*, in which Poſition of the Article the laſt Title is uſually, tho' not always, exegetical of the firſt, to intimate that they both belong to the ſame Subject: (See the Note on *Epheſ.* i. 1) And in all the New Teſtament *the Father* is never ſaid *to appear*: But we often read of *the appearing of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt* to Judgment, which is repreſented, as what will be exceeding glorious; and he is ſpoken of, by way of Emphaſis, as *our Hope*, and *the Hope of Glory*. (Col. i. 27, and 1 Tim. i. 1.) And though Chriſt will come in his Father's as well as his own Glory; yet 'tis not *the Perſon* of the Father, but of *the Son*, that will then come; and make his Appearance. *Col.* iii. 4, and 1 *Pet.* v. 4. (See my Diſcourſe on *Jeſus Chriſt God-Man*, Pag. 58, 59.)

and Brightness of his divine and mediatorial Glory, and in the Glory of his Father, and of all his holy surrounding Angels; (*Mat.* xvi. 27. and xxv. 31. and *Mark* viii. 38.) and will come to *be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe* (2 Thes. i. 10.)

14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.

14. And what may we not look and hope for from him, who loved us, at so high, matchless and astonishing a rate, as freely to devote and give up his own great self, Soul and Body, to the most painful and ignominious Death of the Cross? This he willingly suffered for our Sakes, and in our room and stead, (1 *Pet.* iii. 18.) that he might effectually redeem us *by his Blood* from the Power and Tyranny, as well as from the Guilt and Punishment, of all our Sins, and at length from the In-being of them; and might sanctify, cleanse and separate us to himself for sacred use, and for his Glory, as his special, precious and peculiar Property, by his Father's Gift, his own Purchase, and our own free and full Consent in the Day of his Power, that we might be zealously affected towards him and his Cause, and fervent in Spirit to serve him in the Performance of every Work, which in its own Nature, or by his Appointment, and in his Account, is good and honourable, as being done upon good Principles to good Ends, and in a right manner, according to the good Rule laid down in his Word.

15 These Things speak and exhort, and rebuke with all Authority. Let no Man despise thee.

15. These are Things of so vast Importance, and are so vehemently opposed, or corrupted by the Enemies of Christ and his Gospel, that you ought to be very earnest in preaching and inculcating them, and in sharply reproving the Men and their Errors and Vices, that set themselves against them; and you should do this with all the Authority, that Christ has given you in the Execution of your Office. All this ought to be managed with such Prudence, Faithfulness and Gravity, as shall raise you, and your Office, above the Contempt of your most scornful and haughty Enemies.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How carefully should Ministers adhere to, preach and apply the pure Doctrine of the Gospel, and the Duties that are answerable to it, for Exhortation, Consolation and Reproof, as there may be Occasion; and do this with such Gravity, Sincerity, Faithfulness and Authority in the Name of Christ, and with such plain scriptural Language, and exemplary Behaviour in their own Lives, as shall raise them above Contempt, and make their Enemies ashamed of their Endeavours to reproach them! The Duties, as well as Doctrines of Christianity, are to be taught and urged, not only in a general Way, but with particular Application, as Occasions require, to Believers of all Circumstances and Conditions; to aged Men and Women, that they may be grave, serious, temperate in all things, sound in the Faith, instructive and exemplary in every Grace, as becomes Persons of their standing in Years, and in their holy Profession; to younger People of both Sexes, that they may be prudent, chaste and temperate, and may be wise and affectionate in discharging the Duties of their respective Relations; and to Servants of all Ranks, that they may study to please their earthly Masters of every Character; and may be obedient to their just Commands, faithful, industrious and strictly honest, in managing all their Affairs, and not pert and arrogant in giving Word for Word: Such Behaviour reflects an Honour upon their Christian-Profession, and the Gospel of the Grace of God.

God. And O what a blessed Gospel is this! It teaches, and obliges the Professors of it, or abandon all Irreligion and Profaneness, and all inordinate Inclinations to the Pleasures and Honours of this World; and to live in the Practice of all Sobriety, Honesty and Piety; and it encourages them to look and hope for the heavenly Happiness; which shall be brought to every true Believer at the blessed and glorious appearing of Jesus Christ, who is the great God and their Saviour; and who gave himself to Death for them, that he might redeem them from the Guilt and Dominion, and at length from the Remainders of all Sin, and might sanctify them for himself, as a peculiar People zealously devoted to God, and cheerfully abounding in all good Works to his Praise and Glory.

CHAP. III.

The Apostle goes on to give Orders about Obedience to civil Magistrates, and a becoming Behaviour towards all Men, 1, 2. *Inforces them from a Consideration of what Believers themselves were before Conversion, and are made to be, through Jesus Christ, by regenerating and justifying Grace,* 3—7. *Puts* Titus *upon urging these things, to the end that good Works may be practised by Believers, and upon avoiding vain and useless Disputes.* 8, 9. *Insists on his rejecting a Heretic, after due Admonition.* 10, 11. *Desires that he would come, and bring* Zenas *and* Apollos *with him, to* Nicopolis; *recommends good Works for necessary Purposes,* 12—14. *And concludes, as usual, with Salutations, and a Benediction,* 15.

TEXT.

1 *PUT them in mind to be subject to Principalities and Powers, to obey Magistrates, to be ready to every good Work.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. AS Judaizing Zealots endeavour to dissuade Christians from owning the Authority of Heathen-Governors, you ought to guard them against an Error, so contrary to the Design of the Gospel, and destructive to the political State, and to the Civil Power of Rulers over it: Let therefore all the Professors of Christ's Name be admonished of their Duty, to be peaceably submissive to supreme and subordinate Governors; (1 *Pet.* ii. 13, 14) and to pay a conscientious Obedience to all the just Laws of Civil Magistrates, who, whether they be Christians or not, are ordained of God for the Good of the Community; (*Rom.* xiii. 1—4, see the Notes there) and to be cheerfully willing to do every lawful Thing, that they require; as also to perform every Duty, that is owing to Persons of all Degrees and Stations, yea, good Works of every Kind, relating to God, ourselves and others.

2 *To speak evil of no Man, to be no Brawlers,* but *gentle, shewing all Meekness unto all Men.*

2. Caution them likewise against reviling any one, of whatever Rank, Nation or Religion he be; against falsly charging any Crime upon him; or exposing his Character, with an ill Design, by divulging even the bad Things he may be guilty of; or ever doing it at all, unless some valuable End is to be answer'd by it: Warn them against a litigious, quarrelsome Temper and Behaviour, to the Disturbance of civil or religious Communities: Teach

Teach them, on the contrary, to be of an equitable, candid, yielding Spirit; and to manifest an humble, mild and good Temper in all their Words and Actions towards all Sorts of Men, even Enemies, and ungodly People themselves.

3 For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers Lusts and Pleasures, living in Malice and Envy, hateful, and hating one another.

3. And we surely ought to be ready to go into such an humble and candid Disposition toward those, that are no worse than we once were, and, if left to ourselves, should still have been: For while we were in a State of Nature, under the Power of the Corruptions that reigned in us, even we ourselves were then destitute of all spiritual Knowledge and Wisdom relating to our Duty and Happiness; were disobedient to God, and to his holy, just and good Laws; were wandering (πλανωμενοι) from him, and from the Way of Life and Peace, being seduced by the Treachery of our own Hearts, by false Teachers, and the Temptations of Satan and of this evil World; were perfect Slaves to various sinful Inclinations and sensual Pleasures; yea, were spending our Time in a malicious Way of wishing and doing Ill to those that did not please us, and in envious Thoughts at the Honour and Advantages of those that were above us: And so, upon the Whole, we were most detestable Creatures, odious in ourselves, and to God and all good Men; * and full of bitter Enmity one against another, according to our different Passions and Interests, and most flagrantly so, as we were either *Jews* or *Gentiles*, who reciprocally had an implacable Aversion to each other, as such.

4 But after that the Kindness and Love of God our Saviour towards Man appeared,

4. But a holy and happy Change was made upon us, who were in those hideous Circumstances, when (οτι) the transcendent Benignity of God, who contrived, ordained and brought about, our Salvation by Jesus Christ, and his astonishing *Philanthropy*, (φιλανθρωπια) or special loving-kindness to sinners of Mankind, in Distinction from the fallen Angels, (επεφανη) broke out, and shone forth with illustrious and reviving Beams, upon us, in the Preaching of the Gospel, and in the *Rising of the Sun of Righteousness* himself upon our Souls, *with Healing in his Wings*, (Mal. iv. 2.)

5 Not by Works of Righteousness which we have done, but according to his Mercy

5. As we had so deeply plunged ourselves into all that is vile and hateful, It neither was, nor could be, in Consideration of any good or holy Works which we had performed, that God was induced to show us so high Favour,

* *Hating one another* (μισουντες αλληλους) seems directly to point to the *national* Enmity, that was between the *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and as there was as much on the *Jews* Part against the *Gentiles*, as on the *Gentiles* against the *Jews*, and rather more, it carries a strong Intimation, that the Apostle don't, in this and the following Verses, speak merely of the wretched vile State of the *Gentiles* by Nature, and their Recovery by Grace; but of Mankind in general, inclusive of the *Jews*, and of himself and *Titus*, as well as others: And, upon the closest Attention, I cannot find one Character in the whole Description, that may not be applied *in common* to them; much less can I think, with some, that the Apostle should all along mean only himself, in an Argument to enforce upon all Believers the Duties he had before been recommending to them; and *that*, without giving the least Hint of such a Design in the Variation of his Stile, or in the Tenor of his Discourse, or in any Part of the preceding or following Verses.

there

he saved us, by the Washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

there having been nothing of that kind, but every Thing of a contrary Strain found in us; but it was merely of his own free, self-moving, undeserved and forfeited, yea, abused and provoked Mercy, and according to its own compassionate Propensions, that he brought us out of that deplorable Condition into a State of Salvation, through the cleansing Virtue of regenerating Grace, which was signified by our Baptism with Water, (See the Note on *Ephes.* v. 26.) and was effected by that Renovation in the Spirit of our Minds, which was wrought in us by the special Operation of the Holy Spirit.

6 *Which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour;*

6. Which Holy Spirit, in his Gifts and Graces, God the Father poured out from on High upon us with the greatest Riches and Abundance, according to his infinite Mercy (*ver.* 5.) and his Promise relating to Gospel-times, (*Isa.* xliv. 3. See the Notes on *Acts* ii. 38, 41.) through the Mediation, Merit and Exaltation of Jesus Christ, who is our immediate Saviour, as he purchased all Salvation for us, and bestows it upon us;

7 *That being justified by his Grace, we should be made Heirs according to the Hope of eternal Life.*

7. That being brought into a State of Pardon and Acceptance with God to eternal Life, through Faith in him, under the Spirit's Influence, and so discharged from Guilt and Condemnation by the free Grace of God, on Account of the perfect Righteousness of Jesus Christ the Saviour, we might be brought as Children into his Family; (*John* i. 12.) and, being *Children*, might be *Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Christ, and be glorified together with him*, (Rom. viii. 17.) according to the solid *Ground* of Hope, which God has given us in Christ, and in the Promises, and the *Grace* of Hope, which he has wrought in us upon that Ground, of inheriting eternal Life through a Redeemer.

8 This is *a faithful Saying, and these Things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good Works. These Things are good and profitable unto Men.*

8. All that I have been saying is a true and faithful Word, (λογος) which may, and ought to be, firmly believed; and I would have you frequently assert, and insist upon these important Things in the Course of your Ministry, relating to the wretched State of Man by Nature, and the rich Mercy of God through Jesus Christ our Saviour, for Regeneration, Justification, and eternal Life, (ινα) to the End that those, who have believed in God through Christ, according to the Gospel-Revelation, might be induced, and excited thereby, to use the utmost Care and Diligence to abound, excel and lead the Way to others, (καλων εργων προϊστασθαι) in all such Works, as are honourable to God, and Christ, and to the Christian-Character. These Doctrines, and the good Works, to which they manifestly tend, are every Way excellent in their own Nature; and though God cannot be profited by them, they are exceeding useful and beneficial to Mankind.

9 *But avoid foolish Questions, and Genealogies, and Contentions, and Strivings*

9. But keep yourself clear of, and endeavour to discountenance those senseless, idle, doating Questions, that judaizing Teachers are so fond of; and those intricate endless Genealogies, for making out their own Lineage from this

I and

about the Law; for they are unprofitable and vain.

and the other particular Tribe and Family, (See the first Note on 1 *Tim.* i. 4) which are of no Manner of Advantage, after the Messiah has come, and put an End to their Church-State and Polity; as also their litigious Controversies, and warm Contendings about the Sense and Obligation of the Ceremonial Law, which they would introduce into the Gospel-dispensation: For all these Disputes are intirely useless, as answering no good Purpose; Nay, they are (ματαιοι) foolish and prejudicial, as turning to a very bad Account, for sowing Discord, corrupting the Gospel of Christ, and hindering the Practice of real Godliness.

10 *A Man that is an Heretick, after the first and second Admonition, reject:*

10. If any Professor of Christianity, or Member of a Church, entertain and boldly assert such Errors, as overthrow the Foundation-Doctrines of the Gospel; and especially if he evidently appear to do it with a heretical Heart, to gratify his own Pride, and make himself the Head of a contrary Sect, or out of Prejudice against the Truths themselves, because they lie in direct Opposition to his own Lusts; Let him be solemnly admonished and warned, a first and second Time, of his Sin and Danger; and if, after this, he shall still obstinately persist in his destructive Errors; Reject him and all Communion with him; avoid his Company; caution others against him; and have nothing further to do with such an incorrigible Heresiarch, or Sectary of his Stamp.

11 *Knowing that he that is such, is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.*

11. For you may be well satisfied, that such a Man is utterly turned off from Christ, the Foundation, and from all Goodness; and that he sins against his own Soul, if not against his own Conscience, and sins against the divine Authority, Light and Truth of the Gospel-Revelation: His own avowing, and persisting in these pernicious Errors, is sufficient, without any further Proof, to convict him of them; and so out of his own Mouth he is judged, as being self-condemn'd: And he hereby practically passes Judgment against, and condemns himself, as not fit to stand in any Relation to, or have any Fellowship with the true Church of Christ *.

12. I

* The Paraphrase hints the common Notion of *a Heretic*, as one that appears to be so wicked and perverse, as to act against his own Conscience in broaching and maintaining fundamental Errors: But it chiefly goes upon what I take to be the true Notion of *Self-condemn'd*, (αυτοκατακριτος) as signifying one, whose *own Confession* is enough to convict him, without any further Proof. In this Manner we may understand a Person to be *self-condemn'd*, or *condemn'd of himself*, when Evidence of the Charge against him rises from his *own Confession*, without any Need of further Witnesses. Thus *Job* said, (*Chap.* ix. 20) *If I justify myself, my own Mouth shall condemn me; if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse*, that is, my own Words would condemn me, as a vain proud Boaster: And *Eliphaz* said of *Job*, (Chap. xv. 5, 6) *Thy Mouth utters thine Iniquity, and thou choosest the Tongue of the Crafty; thine own Mouth condemns thee, and not I; yea, thine own Lips testify against thee.* When the slothful Servant hid his Lord's Talent in a Napkin, and went about to excuse it by a dishonourable and unjust Charge against his Lord himself, *He said unto him, Out of thine own Mouth I will judge thee, thou wicked Servant*, (Luke xix. 22.) And when our Lord owned himself to be *the Christ, the Son of the Blessed, the High Priest rent his Clothes, and said, What need we any further Witnesses? Ye have heard the Blasphemy, what think ye? And they all condemn'd him to be guilty of Death*, (Mark xiv. 62, 63, 64.)

12 *When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: For I have determined there to winter.*

12. I have given you these brief Instructions, how to conduct in your present critical Situation; and hope to have an Opportunity of adding what may be of further Use to you, in personal Conversation, as soon as I can well spare, and shall send either *Artemas*, or *Tychicus*, a *beloved Brother, and faithful Minister in the Lord*, (Ephes. vi. 21) to supply your Place, and take care of the Churches at *Crete*: As soon as either of them arrive, I beg that you would make all convenient Speed in coming to me at *Nicopolis* *, where you will probably meet with me: For I purpose, God willing, to go thither in a little Time, and take up my Winter-quarters there.

13 *Bring Zenas the Lawyer, and Apollos, on their Journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them.*

13. And when you set out for that Place, take care to bring *Zenas* the Lawyer, and the zealous, laborious and eloquent *Apollos*, (Acts xviii. 24, 25) along with you; and to provide every thing that may be needful to bear their Expences, and accommodate them in their Journey, that nothing proper and convenient for them in the Way may be deficient, or lacking to them.

14 *And let ours also learn to maintain good Works for necessary Uses, that they be not unfruitful.*

14. And leave it as a Charge with all our Christian Friends and Brethren at *Crete*, and wherever you meet with them, that they be prompt and willing to excel in such good Works of Benevolence, and Hospitality by entertaining religious Strangers, and especially such Gospel-Preachers, as I have been but now recommending to you, (*ver.* 12, 13) and indeed in every good Work, that is laudable and useful, for the necessary Purposes of glorifying God, and *doing good to all Men, and especially to them of the Houshold of Faith*, (Gal. vi. 10) that they may *neither be unprofitable to them, nor barren or unfruitful* themselves, *in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* (2 Pet. i. 8.)

64.) It appears from all these Instances, that by *a Person's own Confession*, whether of real or supposed Crimes, he is looked upon as *self-condemn'd.* And in *the Account that Men shall give of every idle Word in the Day of Judgment*, Christ says, *by thy Words thou shalt be justified, and by thy Words thou shalt be condemn'd.* (Mat xii. 36, 37.)

* This *Nicopolis* is most probably judged by Bishop *Pearson*, and others, to be, not, as the Postscript of this Epistle says, in *Macedonia*; but a Town of that Name upon the Sea-coast of *Epirus*, a Province of *Greece*, on the West towards *Italy*. (See *Wells*'s Geography of the New Testament, Part 2, p. 60.) But, wherever it was, 'tis plain that this Epistle was not written from thence, as the Postscript further makes it; for, had the Apostle been then at *Nicopolis*, it would have been most proper for him to have said, I have determined to winter *here*, and not *there*. (*xxxi*) This also shows that he was then at Liberty; and gives Ground to think, that this Epistle was wrote between his first and second Imprisonment at *Rome*: And his desiring *Titus* to come to him at *Nicopolis*, and proposing to send *Artemas*, or *Tychicus* to supply his Place at *Crete*, carries a strong Intimation, that *Titus* was not, as some would have it, and the Postscript avers, the first Bishop of the Church of the *Cretians*; but that he was an Evangelist, who, according to the Nature of that Office, had no fixed Residence; but travelled about, as Occasions required, from Place to Place, to assist the Apostles in their Work, and come to them, or go on their Messages, wherever they might send them. We have no certain Account of this *Artemas*, nor of *Zenas* the Lawyer, mentioned in the next Verse, beyond what is here said of them; but *Titus*, no doubt, well knew them, at least by Name, to be Persons of worthy Character; and *Zenas* being joined with *Apollos*, (ver. 13) who was a *Jew*, is thought by some to have been an Interpreter of the *Jewish* Law; but *Grotius* supposes, that he might be a *Roman*-Lawyer, as not doubting but that many such became Ministers of Christ; because they saw that all just and righteous Precepts were eminently contained in his Religion.

15. All

15 *All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the Faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.*

15. All the Christian-Brethren, who are at present here, join with me in sending their affectionate Salutations in the Lord, particularly to yourself: And as I have wrote this Letter for the Use and Benefit of the Churches in *Crete*, as well as for your own Direction in the Discharge of your Office toward them, I desire that the like kind Salutations may be presented to all those of them, that sincerely love us, with a Christian-Love, for the sake of that Faith, which we embrace and preach, profess and propagate, which they themselves also have received, and which works by Love. May the free Favour of God the Father, and of Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, together with all its Manifestations and blessed Fruits, abound towards all and every one of you: (See 2 *Cor.* xiii. 14.) This I heartily wish and pray may be, and humbly hope and trust will be your happy Case, in Token of which I sincerely and affectionately add, *Amen.*

RECOLLECTIONS.

How friendly is Christian-Religion to Civil Government, and to an universal Benevolence toward Persons of every Rank and Character! And what sweet and powerful Arguments does it afford to every Work of Piety toward God, of Self-government, and of Tenderness to *the Characters*, together with Meekness and Gentleness toward *the Persons* of all Mankind, whether Friends or Foes! May we often think how wretchedly vile we were, in our natural State, to make us humble in our own Eyes, and favourable in our Dispositions towards others, that are in like deplorable Circumstances still! We ourselves were foolish, disobedient, Wanderers from God and Goodness, Slaves to sensual Passions and Appetites, malicious, envious, odious, and bitter Enemies to the Happiness of one or other of our Fellow-creatures. But, O the Riches and Freeness of divine Mercy and Grace, which, notwithstanding all this Unworthiness and Sinfulness, has made a blessed Change in our Temper and Condition, by means of the Gospel, when it came to us in the Light and Energy of the Spirit! We are hereby brought into a State of Grace, regenerated, justified, and made Heirs of Eternal Life, and have the most solid Grounds for a comfortable and assured Hope of a complete Enjoyment of it. And O with what affecting Demonstration does it appear, that this could never be for the sake of any good Thing done by, or found in such abominable Sinners, as we were; but is all intirely owing to the mere Mercy and Grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Saviour, and is made effectual to us by the special Operation of his Spirit, that the Glory of it all may be ascribed to the sacred Three, according to their joint Agency, and Concernment in bringing about our Salvation! And how should these true and important Sayings of God, be often inculcated, and impressed upon the Minds and Hearts of Believers, for exciting and engaging their diligent Care to excel in all Works of Piety, Righteousness and Charity, that are good and lovely in themselves, and useful to Mankind! How should they shun all trifling, contentious and unprofitable Disputes about Religion! And with what Seriousness should obstinate Heretics be warn'd of their dangerous Errors, by orderly Admonitions! But, in case of Contumacy, with what Detestation should they be rejected, as Persons that would overthrow the Foundation of the Christian-Faith, and that evidently labour at this, and persist in it, as their own self-condemning Profession sufficiently testifies, whether it be against the Dictates of their own Consciences, or not! But how sincerely affectionate should sound Believers be one to another, as Partakers of the same common Faith; and how ready to assist each other in all their Wants, and to give, and receive mutual Salutations in the Lord! May the Love and Grace of God the Father, Son, and Spirit be with all those, that love our Lord Jesus Christ in Sincerity and Truth! *Amen.*

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF THE EPISTLE of the Apoſtle *PAUL* to *PHILEMON*.

In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The PREFACE to the Epiſtle to *PHILEMON*.

THIS Epiſtle to *Philemon*, tho' very ſhort, and wrote (as ſome think about the Year 60, or as others, 63,) on a private Occaſion, is very nervous, entertaining and inſtructive. 'Tis the moſt perfect Pattern of familiar Letter-Writing, every Way worthy of the great Apoſtle, and of our Eſteem and Imitation: It gives us a moſt remarkable Inſtance of the free and ſovereign Grace of God to as abandoned a Wretch, as can well be imagined; and of Providence's over-ruling, even his Wickedneſs to ſubſerve the Deſign of Grace towards him: And it contains the livelieſt Sentiments of flowing Tenderneſs, Generoſity and Humanity, and the fineſt Art of perſwaſive Rhetoric and genteel Addreſs, together with the native Beauty of Chriſtian-Compaſſion, Condeſcenſion, Charity and Love. The Characters, under which the Apoſtle ſpeaks of himſelf, and of *Philemon* and *Oneſimus*, with the Repreſentations he makes of their reſpective Circumſtances, and the judicious Structure of the whole Epiſtle, with every Thought, and indeed every Word from firſt to laſt, in its proper Place, are calculated with almoſt inimitable Dexterity, and yet with a natural, unaffected, eaſy Turn, and godly Sincerity, to anſwer its main Point in View.

Philemon, to whom this Letter was wrote, appears in the Light of an eminent Chriſtian, though, perhaps, naturally of a ſtiff Temper, and too apt to reſent Offences: He, probably, was a Perſon of conſiderable worldly Subſtance, and converted by the Apoſtle's Inſtrumentality, *ver.* 1—4, and 7—19; and he ſeems to have been a *Coloſſian*; for *Oneſimus* is ſaid to be *one of them*, Col. iv. 9; and *Archippus*, who is ſaluted here, (*ver.* 2.) is directed to take heed to his Miniſtry there, *Col.* iv. 17.

Onesimus, on whose Behalf the Apostle wrote, was *Philemon*'s Slave, and had turned a Thief and Runagate, who, in his Rambles, came to *Rome*, at the Time of the Apostle *Paul*'s first Confinement there, as appears from the Hope he expresses of his coming to *Colossæ*, ver. 22; answerable to like Expressions of it in that Situation, *Phil.* i. 25. and ii. 24; whereas, in his second Imprisonment, he had no Doubt but that the Time of his Departure was then at hand, 2 *Tim* iv. 6; but, in his first Imprisonment, he was allow'd to preach to Company that came to him in his own hired House, where he dwelt as a Prisoner at large, *Acts* xxviii. 30, 31. (See the Note there) And *Onesimus*, being brought by the Providence of God under these Ministrations, the Holy Spirit set the Word home upon his Heart to make it effectual for his Conversion, which laid the Foundation of a most cordial Love between the Apostle and him; in so much that *Paul* would have been glad to have him for his Attendent, and *Onesimus* would willingly have waited upon him, in his Confinement, *ver.* 13. But as Christian-Religion makes no Alteration in civil Rights, and the Apostle had learnt that *Onesimus* was *Philemon*'s Property by the Laws of the Country, he would not detain him; but sending him back to his Master, to whom he was willing to go, wrote this Letter to dispose *Philemon* to forgive former Injuries, and to receive him into his Family and Favour again.

After a very moving and endearing Salutation, 1—3, *and most affectionate Expressions of Joy and Praise, on Account of* Philemon's *steady Faith in the Lord Jesus, and Love to all the Saints, and particularly to the Poor among them,* 4—7, *The Apostle, with a most obliging Address, opens the compassionate Design of his Letter, and throws together a Variety of surprising, well adjusted and moving Topics, to recommend* Onesimus *to* Philemon's *kind Regards, and engage him to accept of the Return of his penitent Fugitive, who would now make him a rich Amends for all the Misdemeanors, he had formerly been guilty of; and for whom the Apostle promises to make up any Loss, that* Philemon *had sustained by him,* 8—22; *And then concludes, according to his Custom, with Salutations, and a Benediction,* 23—25.

TEXT.	PARAPHRASE.
1 PAUL *a Prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy* our *Brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and Fellow-Labourer,*	1. PAUL, * who is now suffering as a Prisoner at *Rome*, 2 on account of his faithful Testimony to Jesus Christ, in preaching the Gospel of Salvation alone through Faith in him; and the excellent *Timothy*, who, as a Christian and Minister, is a Brother in the Houshold of Faith, and in the Work of the Lord, heartily join (See the Note 1 *Cor.* i. 1.) in sending this Epistle to *Philemon*, our dearly beloved Brother in Christ, (*v.* 7) and Fellow-Servant for promoting his Cause and Interest, according to the advantageous Station, in

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* Since the Apostle intended to proceed, not on the Foot of *Authority*, but of *Friendship and Love*, in his Address to *Philemon* (ver. 8, 9) his Prefacing the Epistle with *Paul, the Prisoner of the Lord*, was more suitable, decent and melting, as well as condescending, and more likely to work upon a compassionate generous Soul, and so to carry his Point, than if he had begun with *Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ*, (which *Philemon* well knew him to be) as he usually did other Epistles, where any concerned in them either denied, or disputed his Authority. (See the Note on *Gal.* i. 1.)

2 And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our Fellow-Soldier, and to the Church in thy House.

which God has placed him; * as also to the amiable *Apphia*, whom we love in the Truth; (2 *John* ver. 1.) and to the *Colossian*-Minister, *Archippus*, who, having listed under the Banner of the Captain of Salvation, wars a good Warfare, as a Fellow-Soldier with us, for the Advancement of his Kingdom and Glory; and to the Whole of your religious Family, dear *Philemon*, which for the Beauty of its Discipline and Order, social Worship, Harmony and holy Conversation, is a lively Image of a regular Church of Christ.

3 Grace to you, and Peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. We most affectionately unite in our earnest Wishes and Prayers, that the Riches of Divine Grace in their utmost Extent, Manifestations, Fruits and Effects, [illegible] all Manner of Prosperity for this World and a better, may be multiplied to all, and every one of you, (ὑμιν) by the free Gift of God our heavenly Father, as the original Fountain; and by the Mediation, Merit and Communication of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the grand appointed Medium of Conveyance, and the Procurer and Dispenser of all, in the Administration of his Office, as Mediator.

4 I thank my God, making Mention of thee always in my Prayers,

5 Hearing of thy Love and Faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all Saints;

4, 5. As to yourself in particular, my compassionate good Friend *Philemon*, I am full of Thanksgiving and Praise, on your Behalf, to my Covenant-God and Father, bearing you on my Heart, and mentioning you before him with great Delight in my daily Addresses at the Throne of Grace, on Account of what I have had the Pleasure of hearing, upon good Intelligence, of the continued Stedfastness, lively Exercise and Increase, and honourable Profession of your Faith, which you hold fast in a firm Dependence on the Person and Offices, Righteousness, Grace and Government of Jesus, who is Lord of all; † and of your growing and exemplary Love to all the holy Professors of his Name, because they visibly bear his Image, belong to him, and are beloved of him.

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* As to the *Persons* saluted in these two Verses, *Philemon*'s being called a *Fellow-Labourer* may probably intimate, that he was engaged in the Work of the Ministry, but does not certainly prove it; because any that were assistant to the Apostles, tho' but in private Stations, for helping forward the Work of the Lord, were sometimes spoken of under that Character, as *Aquila* and *Priscilla* were; *Rom.* xvi. 3. (See the Paraphrase there) and they, that hospitably received the Servants of Christ, are called *Fellow-Labourers* (συνεργοι) *to the Truth*. 3 John, ver. 8.)—*Apphia* is supposed by some of the Antients to have been *Philemon*'s Wife; the Epithet *beloved* (αγαπητη) is *Feminine*, but the *Alexandrian*, *Clermont*, and other Copies add *Sister*. (Vid. *Mill.* in Loc.)—*Archippus* was a Minister of the Church at *Colosse*; (See the Paraphrase on *Col.* iv. 17.) and Dr. *Lightfoot* inclined to think, that he was *Philemon*'s Son, or at least, a Sojourner in his House. (Vol. I. p. 327 of his Works.)—The Church in *Philemon*'s House seems to take in the Whole of his Christian-Family. (See the Note on *Rom.* xvi. 5.) And so the Apostle saluted all that were dear to him and dwelt with him, and spoke honourably and affectionately of them to ingratiate himself with them, and engage their Interest with *Philemon* in Favour of *Onesimus*.

† *Faith* manifestly refers to the *Lord Jesus*, and *Love* to *all the Saints*, according to the natural Order, in which these Expressions are set, *Col.* i. 4; and therefore *here*, as well as in several other Places, there must be allowed a Transposition of Words; and so the regular Position of them in this Sentence is thus, *Hearing of thy Faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and Love towards all the Saints.* "Our Translators (says Mr. *Blackwall* in his Sacred Classicks, Vol. I. Pag. 87) improperly retained the Transposition, which will not be endured in *English*; but such Construction is allowable in *Greek*, and used by the noblest Authors."

6. And

6 That the Communication of thy Faith may become effectual, by the acknowledging of every good Thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

6. And, in Reflection on this, my earnest Request to God for you is, that your sharing in the common Faith may be effectual to engage you unto all further Acts of Generosity; and that your Readiness to communicate, as the Fruit of your Faith, may be an effectual Means of inducing all that hear of it, and especially that receive the Benefit, to make the most grateful Acknowledgments of all those kind and holy Dispositions, that are wrought, and operate in you and your benevolent Family (ἐν ὑμῖν εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν) toward Jesus Christ, and his poor Members and Servants, for his Sake, by Virtue derived from him, and to his Honour and Glory, and the Furtherance of his Gospel.

7 For we have great Joy and Consolation in thy Love, because the Bowels of the Saints are refresh'd by thee, Brother.

7. For 'tis an exceeding great Joy and Consolation to me in my Bonds, as it also is to *Timothy*, (ver. 1) to think of the generous Expressions of your sincere Love; because I am informed, that the hungry Appetites and empty Stomachs of the Poor, whether private Christians, or holy Ministers, are abundantly relieved and satisfied, to the comforting of their Hearts, by your charitable Donations, my dear Brother.

8 Wherefore, tho' I might be much bold in Christ, to enjoin thee that which is convenient,

8. Encouraged therefore by your pious and compassionate Temper, Tho', were I to insist on my apostolic Authority, which I have received from Christ, and on your Obligations to me his Servant, (*ver.* 19) I might, with the high Tone of a Father, take the Freedom of commanding you to do what is proper, fit and right in the Case, I am going to recommend to you.

9 Yet for Love's Sake I rather beseech thee, *being such a one as Paul the aged, and now also a Prisoner of Jesus Christ.*

9. Yet I rather choose to wave *that* *, and, putting myself upon a Level with you, as your Brother in Christ, (*ver.* 7) to intreat it of you, as such, by all the Love, that the Lord himself, and I bear to you, and that you bear to him and his Poor, and particularly to me his suffering Servant; and I cannot doubt, but that your Sense of the Love of Christ to you, and your Love to him and his Members, and your compassionate and tenderly sympathizing Regards to me, will move you to do what in you lies to comfort me, when you consider that I am not only *Paul*, your fast Friend and Brother, but your aged Friend

* In what a handsome Manner does the Apostle just hint, and immediately drop, the Consideration of his Authority to *command*, and proceed, in the most tender and moving Strain, upon the Foot of *Love* and Friendship, to *beseech Philemon* to hearken to him, as to *his Friend, his aged Friend*, and *Prisoner in the Lord*, to work upon the Veneration, Compassion and kind Regards of one, whose generous Soul he had just before warm'd with the most pleasing Sensations, that arise from doing Good, by reciting, with Joy and Praise, the great Love and Liberality he had shewn to all the Saints ! *ver.* 4—7. And with what Endearment, in the next Verse, does he call *Onesimus* his *Son*, before he so much as mentions his Name; and as soon as he had mentioned it, lest *Philemon's* Resentment should rise too high at the very hearing it, With what fine Address does he only just touch upon his former Faults, and instantly pass on to the happy Change, that was made upon him, to carry *Philemon's* Thoughts off from what had been bad, to what now was good in him; and so dispose him to attend to the Apostle's Request, and to all the Motives, he was going to advance to enforce it, in *Onesimus's* Favour !

of ripe Judgment, and grown old in the Service of our common Lord; and am now, under the Infirmities and Decays of advanced Years, suffering all the Hardships of a Prison, through the Malice of my Enemies, for the Sake of Jesus Christ and his Gospel, which I preach, and you have received.

10 *I beseech thee for my Son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my Bonds:*

10. What I, in all Love, would particularly request of you, and is the present Occasion of my Writing, relates to your shewing Kindness to one, who, by a wonderful Change wrought upon him, is become as dear to me, as though in a literal Sense he were a Son that had proceeded from my own Bowels: (*ver.* 12.) To speak plainly, if [illegible] without Offence, I mean *Onesimus*, your poor Slave, to whom, whatsoever he was before, I am become a spiritual Father, as having been instrumental, through the Grace of Christ, in regenerating him by means of the Word, which I have been permitted to preach in my Confinement.

11 *Which in Time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me:*

11. In this Manner have I begotten him to Christ, who, as I perceive by his own penitent Confession with Brokenness of Heart, was formerly a worthless and injurious Servant to you; but now, having passed through the new Birth, is become, according to the Signification of his Name, *a very useful* one, and will approve himself to be diligent and faithful, to the Advantage of any, that may employ him, as I have found him to be to myself since his Conversion. He would certainly make a very good Servant now to you, were you to take him again into your House and Favour; and I should reckon myself very happy in his Service, were he to remain with me.

12 *Whom I have sent again: Thou therefore receive him that is mine own Bowels.*

12. Upon the Proof I have had of him, and knowing his Willingness to return and submit himself, and make all humble Acknowledgments of his former Crimes, and do his Duty for Time to come, I have sent him back again to you, with this Recommendatory Letter; I therefore earnestly beseech you, (*ver.* 10) to receive him into your Favour and Family, for my Sake, as well as for your own Advantage, with the same Readiness and Affection, as you would any Child of mine, tenderly beloved by me, as the Fruit of my own Body, and so a Part of myself, who shall rejoice, or be grieved at Heart, according to your good or severe Treatment of him.

13 *Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy Stead he might have ministered unto me in the Bonds of the Gospel.*

13. For my own Part, I would have gladly kept him with me, to perform all the good Offices toward me, which I am satisfied, were you here, you would be willing to do for me yourself; or which, in your Absence, you would wish any Servant of yours should do in your stead, while I am loaded and confined with the Chains, that, for preaching the Gospel, are laid upon me, as a Prisoner of Jesus Christ. (*ver.* 9.)

14. But

14 *But without thy Mind would I do nothing; that thy Benefit should not be as it were of Necessity, but willingly.*

14. But how much soever I should have chosen, and been pleased with this, I consider him as your Property, who have a legal Right to him, and to all his best Service; and therefore would not take one Step this Way, without your Approbation and free Consent, that the Benefit I should receive from your Servant, and consequently from yourself, might not be extorted from you, as what you could not decently refuse; but that it might be left intirely to your own Choice to do in it, just as you think best; and that whatever Favour you may shew him and me, it might not proceed from any Force upon your Inclinations; but merely from your own Good-will and Pleasure.

15 *For perhaps he therefore departed for a Season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever;*

15. For, possibly, the Design of Providence, in permitting his leaving you, and your losing his Service for a little Time, as it were but for an Hour, (πρὸς ὥραν) was, not only that he might be brought under those Means of Grace, which God intended to make effectual for his Conversion, who, under all the excellent Opportunities he had in your eminently religious Family, grew worse and worse; but also that he might be made a so much better Servant, and be so ingratiated thereby to you, as might give you the greater Pleasure and Advantage in receiving him again, to continue with you all the Days of his Life,* like those Servants under the Law, who said, *I love my Master, and will not go out free*; (Ex. xxi. 5) and even to dwell with you in Heaven to all Eternity.

16 *Not now as a Servant, but above a Servant, a Brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the Flesh, and in the Lord.*

16. You may entertain him now, not merely as a common Servant or Slave; but as one that is worthy of still higher Respect, even as a Brother in the Lord, greatly beloved of him, and of all his Christian-Acquaintance; and especially of me, who have been the Instrument of this happy and holy Change upon him, and have had the best Opportunities of observing his honourable Behaviour in consequence of it: But how much more still ought he now to be affectionately esteemed and valued by you, as your Property, relating to the Concerns of the Body, and as henceforth your most loving and dutiful Servant; yea, as your Brother in the Faith and Fellowship of the Gospel, and equal Sharer, as such, with you, in all the Privileges and Blessings of Christ's Family and Kingdom here, and for ever hereafter?

17 *If thou count me therefore a Partner, receive him as myself.*

17. If therefore, upon the Whole, you have any Value and Respect for me, and count me your Friend, Brother, Fellow-labourer, and joint Heir of Grace and Glory, and

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* *For ever* here, in Allusion, as some suppose, to *Ex.* xxi. 6; could be at most only to the End of the Servant's Life; nor can it be carried any further, if we suppose, with others, that the Apostle referred to *Heathen-Servants*, that were bought by the *Israelites* to be their Bond-men and Bond-maids for ever, *Lev.* xxv. 44, 46: But the Argument is still more touching, on Supposition that the Apostle had a further Eye to their eternally dwelling together in Heaven.

one, that has been blessed of God to the Good of your own Soul; and would make me a Partaker of that generous Goodness, which you have been so ready to show to others, (ver. 7.) I beseech you not to deny my Request; but receive him with the same Cheerfulness and Kindness, as you would my own Person, who so tenderly interest myself in his Case, and shall reckon your Favour to him, as shewn to myself.

18 *If he hath wronged thee, or owed thee ought, put that on mine Account.*

18. If (as there is great Reason to fear) you have sustained Loss or Damage, by his Purloinings or Embezzelments, be it to a greater or lesser Degree; or if he is any way in Debt to you, Let not that hinder your free Reception of him. Though he be not able to make any Restitution, place all that to my Account †; so as, in a Way of legal Estimation, to impute it to me, and make me answerable for it.

19 *I Paul have written it with mine own Hand, I will repay it: Albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.*

19. I *Paul*, your faithful Friend, engage to you, as I now do, under my own Hand-writing, that (God willing) I will certainly clear off this Score, and make you full Satisfaction to the utmost Farthing: This I will chearfully do, notwithstanding my straiten'd Circumstances, and your Affluence; though I might insist upon it, but shall not, that, in balancing Accounts, you owe me a great deal more than he can have wrong'd you of; even, in a Way of Instrumentality, the Salvation of your own Soul, as I was the Means of bringing you to the Knowledge of Christ, and Faith in him for eternal Life.

20 *Yea, Brother, let me have Joy of thee in the Lord: Refresh my Bowels in the Lord.*

20. Yea, I earnestly beseech you, as a Brother in sacred Relation to *me*, as well as to *Onesimus*, to receive him cordially for my Sake, as well as his own, not to say for yours also, and most of all for the Lord Jesus's Sake, that I may rejoice in Reflection upon the Efficacy of his Grace to engage your Love and Forgiveness to this poor Slave, as one that you and I esteem, under the Consideration of him as united to Christ by Faith; Let my Heart be comforted now, in my Bonds, with the great Pleasure I shall feel in your dealing kindly with him, whom I am so touchingly concerned for, on the Lord Christ's Account, in whose Name I beg this Favour of you.

21 *Having Confidence in thy Obedience, I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.*

21. The great Confidence I have had in your Willingness to hearken to me, and yield Obedience to our Lord's Commands, with respect to forgiving Injuries, and receiving a Disciple in the Name of a Disciple, (*Mat.* x. 42, and *Luke* vi. 37) encouraged me to write to you on behalf of this poor returning Fugitive; and I have a pleasing Satisfaction in my own Mind, that you will be ready to show

† *Put that on mine Account*, (τοῦτο ἐμοὶ ἐλλόγει) or *impute it to me*, expresses, and gives us a just Notion of proper *Imputation*, in a Way of legal Account; and this, with a similar Verb of like Signification (λογίζομαι) is render'd *impute*, with regard to *Sin* and *Righteousness*, Rom. iv. 6, 8, 11, and v. 13. Here then is a plain Instance of the Imputation of that to another, which was not his own before.

him,

him, even more Favour, than I have requested for him; and so I leave that Matter for the present.

22 But withal prepare me also a Lodging. For I trust that through your Prayers I shall be given unto you.

22. But I wou'd further add my Desire, that you wou'd provide some proper Place for me to lodge at, when I come to *Colosse*, and may have an Opportunity of making a personal Acknowledgement of your Kindness to *Onesimus*, and me therein, and of paying what he owes you: For I trust in the Lord, that by Means of, and in Answer to your and other Christians Prayers, (*Phil.* i. 19.) I shall, for this Time, be set at Liberty from my Bonds, as one graciously given of God to you for your further spiritual Profit, and shall have the Pleasure of making you a Visit to our mutual Satisfaction.

23 There salute thee Epaphras, my Fellow-Prisoner in Christ Jesus:

23. *Epaphras*, one of your Ministers, a dear Fellow-Servant, who is fervent in Prayer, and has a great Zeal for the Church at *Colosse*, (*Col.* i. 7. and iv. 12, 13.) and is now my Fellow-Sufferer in Prison for the Cause of Christ, sends his most affectionate Respects to you, (See the Note on *Phil.* ii. 25.)

24 Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my Fellow-Labourers.

24. And so does *John Mark*, for whom I have the greatest Friendship, notwithstanding some former Displeasure I conceived at his having gone from me; (*Acts* xv. 37, 38.) as also *Aristarchus* the *Macedonian*, who was exposed to the utmost Danger, for my Sake, at *Ephesus*; (*Acts* xix. 29.) and *Demas*; * and *Luke* the beloved Physician, (*Col.* iv. 14.) who are my Fellow-Labourers in the Work of the Lord.

25 The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your Spirit. Amen.

25. May the free Love and Favour of our Lord Jesus Christ, with all its suitable and abounding Manifestations, Fruits and Effects, be with the Soul of every one of you, (μετα του πνευματος υμων) to guide, comfort, strengthen and sanctify you, yet more and more, and to supply all your Wants, till ye arrive at his heavenly Kingdom. In Testimony of my ardent Desire and Hope of this all-comprehensive Blessing for you, I say *Amen*.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a wonderful Change does Sovereign Grace make upon Sinners, as profligate, base and abandon'd as *Onesimus* had been, who of a perfidious Thief, unprofitable lazy Slave and Vagrant, and Runagate from his Master, became a sober, diligent, useful and faithful Servant! How easily can God over rule even the Wickedness of those for good, to whom he has a Design of showing Mercy! With what tender Affection do the Instruments of their Conversion think and speak of them, as tho' they were the Children of their own Bowels! How becoming is it for those, that are their Masters after the Flesh, and have been injured by them, to forgive and love such Penitents, as more than bare Servants, even as Brethren in the Lord! How happy may they think themselves in the future better Services, that are to be charitably expected from them! And how worthy of Imitation is the great Apostle's Wisdom, Condescension, and engaging Way of arguing, to recommend returning Penitents to the Favour and

* This is that *Demas*, who afterwards, in the Apostle's second Imprisonment at *Rome*, forsook him in his Troubles, *having loved this present World*, 2 Tim. iv. 10. (See the Note there.)

Compassion of those, that had been justly offended at them for past Abuses! They are to be intreated for Love's Sake, with an Address to their benevolent Temper, and Confidence in their Friendship; and with the most mollifying, instead of aggravating Representations of the Crimes, that have been committed, rather than to be over-aw'd with Authority, or deprived of their civil Property, without their own free Consent: They are to be reminded of the happy Turn, that is given to the formerly iniquitous Disposition of him, that is recommended to their Favour; of the Advantage that will accrue to themselves by complying with a Request on his Behalf; and of the Kindness, that will be therein shown, not to say the Obligation they are under, to the interceding Friend, who will esteem it as done to himself, will readily undertake to repay any Damages, that have been suffered by Purloinings, or otherwise, and will rejoice in the Lord, on Account of his disposing them to manifest a forgiving Spirit, for his Sake. With what Face could any, that harden themselves against such melting Importunity, ever think of seeing the Friend that uses it with so much earnest Concern for its Success, especially if he be one, to whom they, in some Sense, owe their own Happiness for this World, or a better? And O how amiable is the Person, whose Faith in the Lord Jesus, and Love to all the Saints are display'd, in forgiving the Offences of Brethren, and bountifully refreshing the Bowels of the Poor, and in contributing, all that in him lies, to the Comfort of the aged, persecuted, afflicted Servants of the Lord; and whose religious Family appears with all the Beauty and Order of a Church of Christ! Such exemplary and useful Professors of the Gospel ought to be remember'd, with Thankfulness to God in Prayer; and there can't but be an exceeding Pleasure in saluting them after a godly Sort, and having a holy Partnership and Communion with them. Who would not wish, that every Blessing of Grace and Peace may be multiplied to them, from the Father of Mercies, through the Mediation of his Son! May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with their Spirits; and all that love him say *Amen*.

A PRAC-

A PRACTICAL

EXPOSITION

OF THE

EPISTLE to the *HEBREWS.*

In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The PREFACE to the Epiſtle to the *HEBREWS*.

THIS Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* is moſt generally ſuppoſed, and that with the greateſt Probability, to have been written by the Apoſtle *Paul* before the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, while he was a Priſoner at *Rome* about the Year of our Lord *Sixty-three*; though on account of *Jewiſh* Prejudices againſt him, as the Apoſtle of the *Gentiles*, and a ſtrenuous Aſſerter of Juſtification alone thro' Faith in Chriſt without the Deeds of the Law, it may be looked upon as a Point of great Prudence in him, that he concealed his Name, and that inſtead of laying the Weight of his Doctrine, as he uſually did in other Epiſtles, upon his Apoſtolic Authority, he began this, and all along carried on his Deſign in it, upon the Foot of the Authority of the *Old Teſtament-Scriptures*, which theſe *Hebrews* univerſally owned to be of divine Inſpiration; and, as the *Poſtſcript* avers, it ſeems to have been ſent by *Timothy*. (See *Chap.* xiii. 22, 23.)

The moſt conſiderable Evidences of the Apoſtle *Paul*'s being the Author of it are, his ſublime Sentiments, and cloſe, nervous and pathetic Way of Reaſoning, and applying Things that relate to the Perſon and Offices of Chriſt, and to the Nature, Uſe and Deſign, together with the Aboliſhment, of the *Moſaic* Inſtitutions, wherein this Writer ſhews the moſt exact and extenſive Acquaintance with the Laws of the *Jewiſh* Church, which the Apoſtle *Paul* had been moſt accurately led into by *Gamaliel*'s Inſtructions, under whom *he profited in the Jews Religion above many of his Equals*; (Gal. i. 14) and in this Epiſtle he ſpeaks of his *Bonds*, and of *Timothy* as his Companion, and cloſes it with Salutations from the Chriſtians of *Italy*, and with his uſual Benediction, *Grace be with you all*, which he mentions as the Token in all his Epiſtles, 2 *Theſſ.* iii. 17, 18. And ſome ſuppoſe the Apoſtle *Peter* refers to this very Epiſtle, when, writing to the *Hebrews*, he takes

takes Notice of what his beloved Brother *Paul* had wrote to them. 2 *Pet.* iii. 15, 16. (See the Note there.) Upon the Whole, this Epistle was owned to be the Apostle *Paul*'s by the Generality of the Primitive Writers and Councils of the first four Centuries; and for many Ages was universally received, as such, by the Churches, as has been observed by various learned Men. (See Dr. *Owen*'s third Exercitation, and Dr. *Whitby*'s and Mr. *Peirce*'s Preface to this Epistle.) I shall therefore make no Scruple, in the Course of the Exposition, to speak of the Apostle *Paul* as its Author.

However, it seems that the Persons, to whom it was most immediately sent, knew who was the Author of it, since he says to them, *Chap.* xiii. 18, 19, *Pray for us; for we trust we have a good Conscience in all Things, willing to live honestly. But I beseech you the rather to do this, that we may be restored to you the sooner.* And the divine Authority of this Epistle (which has been readily allowed by some, that have not ascribed it to the Apostle *Paul*) has no Dependence on our certainly knowing the Name of the Writer, any more than the Authority of several Books of the Old Testament does upon our knowing, who were the Pen-men of them.

The *Jews*, to whom this Epistle was sent, seem to have been the whole Body of them, that had made a Profession of Christ; but it was probably sent directly and immediately to those of *Judea* and *Jerusalem*, to be communicated from them to their Brethren that were dispersed through various Countries: And as many of them were too much attached to the *Mosaic* Law, and others were in great Danger of apostatizing from Christ and the Gospel, through the Subtilty of false Teachers, and through the violent Persecutions that their Infidel Brethren stirred up against them; so the Apostle accommodates the different Parts of his Epistle to their respective Circumstances, and even to the Conversion of such Unbelievers among them, as preferred the *Legal* to the *Gospel*-Dispensation. Accordingly his principal Design is to set forth the Excellency of the Gospel above the Law, in such a Way as might direct and establish the Faith of true Believers in it, without any Mixture of the *Mosaic* Observances, and encourage them to adhere faithfully and perseveringly to it under all the Difficulties and Trials, that attended their Profession of it; as might also recommend it to the Acceptance of *Jewish* Unbelievers; and might awaken and convince such of their Danger, as should reject, or apostatize from it.

In Pursuit of this great and complicated Design, he sets out with a lofty Account of the Dignity of Christ's *Person*, who is the divine Author and Subject of the Gospel, and superior to all the *Prophets*, and even to the most exalted *Angels*, by whose Ministration the Law was delivered at Mount *Sinai*, together with the distinguishing Regard which he had shewn to the *human*, more than to the *angelic* Nature. *Chap.* i. ii. Hereupon he particularly represents Christ to be superior in *Office*, as a *Prophet*, to *Moses*; and, as a *Priest*, to *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful, and to *Aaron* the High Priest of *Israel*, together with the Efficacy and Eternity of his Priesthood, which was after the Order of *Melchizedeck*, who was a *King*, as well as a *Priest*, Chap. iii—vii. Having thus established the transcendent Dignity of Christ's *Person* and *Offices*, and *that* particularly in Opposition to the Defects of the *Levitical Priesthood*, he goes on to the Excellency of his *Offering*, beyond those that were made under the Law; and of the *New Covenant*, which is established upon better Promises, than that of Mount *Sinai*, Chap. viii. From thence he proceeds to shew the great Benefit of *Gospel-Ordinances*, above those of the *Mosaic* Institution; and of the *Sacrifice* of Christ, by which these and the New-Testament-Church are purified, beyond what could be obtained by

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those Sacrifices, by which the first Tabernacle, and its various Appendages of Worship were dedicated to God, as prefigurative of these, *Chap.* ix. He then goes on to *the Perfection* of Christ's *Sacrifice* to make Atonement for Sin, of which all the Sacrifices under the Law were only Shadows and Figures, utterly insufficient to take away Sin, *Chap.* x. Hereupon he gives a noble View of the Excellency and Power of *Faith* in the Patriarchs and holy Men of Old, to animate the believing *Hebrews* to Perseverance in the Faith of the Gospel, *Chap.* xi. And, adding to this Cloud of Witnesses the Example of a suffering Saviour, and the Consideration of the much greater Excellence and Duration of the *Christian*, than the *Legal Dispensation*, He exhorts professing Believers to *persist in the Faith and Holiness of the Gospel*, and to take heed of *Apostacy*, notwithstanding all the cruel Persecutions and formidable Dangers they were exposed to for their holy Profession; and concludes with further Exhortations to various Duties, with desiring their Prayers, and offering up his own for them, and with Salutations and his usual Benediction, *Chap.* xii. xiii. —— But in several Parts of the Epistle he gives himself a great Liberty of enlarging upon preceding Topicks, and often intermingles solemn Cautions, sweet Encouragements, and earnest Exhortations to Patience, Constancy and Perseverance, suitable to the different Characters of those *Jews*, into whose Hands this Epistle might be supposed to come.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

The Apostle, to shew the Excellency of the Gospel of Christ above the Law, and to encourage an Adherence to it, introduces his great Design with an Account of the different Manner and Seasons in which, and of the Persons by whom, the Revelations of them respectively were made; and describes the transcendent Dignity of the Son of God in his divine Person, and in his creating and mediatorial Work, whereby he excels all that went before him, 1—3. *And in his Superiority to all the holy Angels, which is proved by a Comparison between him and them in various Particulars, in which he has a glorious Pre-eminence above them,* 4—14.

TEXT.	PARAPHRASE.
1 GOD, *who at sundry Times, and in divers Manners, spake in Time past unto the Fathers by the Prophets,*	1. MY great Design in writing this Epistle to the *Jewish* Brethren, is to give them a just View of the great Difference there is between the *Mosaic* Law and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and of the vast Preference of *this* Dispensation to *that*, and thereby to engage them to embrace and adhere to the *latter*, as what is intended to perfect and supersede the *former*: In order hereunto, Let us first of all consider that, though they were both of divine Original; yet God the Father, who antiently declared his Mind and Will to our pious Ancestors, did it not fully, nor all at once, but (πολυμερῶς) by Degrees, with increasing Light, in several Parcels, one Time after another, before the Days of *Moses*; and then by him, and all along afterwards by other inspired Prophets under the *Jewish* Dispensation, until the Spirit of Prophecy ceased in the Church of *Israel*; and who in divers Ways communicated his Word to them, as in Dreams, Visions, dark Figures, and immediate Impulses, and the like, in such a gradual Manner, as left Room for an Expectation of still further Discoveries of his Mind and Will in the Messiah's Days, who, as the *Samaritans*, and the *Jews* themselves believed, would give the fullest and clearest Revelation, that ever should be made in this World to the Consummation of all Things. (See *John* iv. 25.)
2 *Hath in these last Days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed Heir of all Things, by whom also he made the Worlds;*	2. God, I say, at the Close of the *Jewish* State, and under the last Dispensation of his Grace, which was frequently foretold as *the latter Days* and the *last Times*, has now completely made known the whole System or Scheme of his Counsels in the Gospel to us, their Descendents, by a much more glorious Messenger, even by his eternal, only begotten and incarnate Son, (*John* i. 18) who, as he, being by Nature God, has an original and essential Right to inherit all Things; so by special Constitution, agreeable to the personal Union of the divine and human Natures in him, God the Father ordained, and settled him in his incarnate State

State and Office-Character, as God-Man Mediator, to be his *First-born, higher than the Kings of the Earth*, (Pf. lxxxix. 27) the Lord, Proprietor and Possessor, Ruler and Disposer of all Persons and Things, *and Head over all Things to the Church*; (Ephes. i. 22) insomuch that we cannot inherit any Blessing, but under him: And of this he cannot but be infinitely worthy, as the Creator of all, by whom, not as an Instrument or Under-Agent, but as a divine Person, who, exerting his own Power in a proper Order, together with the Father, made the upper and lower Worlds, and all Things whatsoever, from the highest to the lowest Ranks of Creatures that are in them; So that *without him was not any Thing made that was made.* (See the Notes on *ver.* 10, and *John* i. 3, and *Col.* i. 16.)

3 Who being the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person, and upholding all Things by the Word of his Power, when he had by himself purged our Sins, sat down on the Right Hand of the Majesty on high;

3. All his Father shines in him, who is originally, as a divine Person, the illustrious Splendor of the Glory, and most exact Character of the Person of his Father, as a Son of the same Nature, and essential Properties with him *; and who manifestatively, as the Son of God incarnate, exhibits such an accurate, substantial and visible Representation of the Father in his infinite Wisdom, Power and Grace, Holiness and every other Perfection, that *he, who has seen the Son, has seen the Father also:* (John xiv. 9.) And as this glorious Son of God created; so he supports, maintains and governs all Ranks, Orders and Individuals of his Works, by his own almighty efficacious Operation, which he exerts with as much Ease as by speaking a Word, by which he commands, and they stand fast; (*Ps.* xxxiii. 9) and so *by him all Things consist*, (Col. i. 17) even by his providential Influence, in whom, as well as in God the Father, *we live, and move, and have our Being:* (Acts xvii. 28.)† And this Son of God being thus superlatively excellent in

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* As no one Similitude taken from Creatures is sufficient to illustrate, both the essential Union, and personal Distinction, of the Father and Son; so, as I humbly conceive, the Son's being *the Brightness of the Glory* (απαυγασμα της δοξης) of the Father, relates to his *essential* and inseparable Union with the Father, as *all the Fulness of the Godhead dwells* substantially *in him.* (See the Note on *Col.* ii. 9.) And this may be called the *Brightness of the Father's Glory*, in Allusion to the refulgent Brightness of a luminous Body, and particularly the Sun, which is indeed nothing different from *the Nature* of the Sun itself; and his being *the express Image* or *Character* (χαρακτηρ) *of his Person* or *Subsistence* (υποστασεως) relates to his *personal* Distinction from the Father, in which the Son is perfectly like him, and makes a complete Representation of him, in Allusion to the exact and undefective Likeness of a Die and its Coin, or of a Seal and its Impression upon Wax, which exactly answers Line to Line. These Representations cannot indeed fully express Things, as they are in the divine Being; but they are the best that our narrow Minds are capable of to serve the several Purposes, for which they are used: And the Apostle's having first spoke in such strong and magnificent Terms of the Son's being *the Brightness of the Father's Glory*, was sufficient to guard against an Imagination of a Difference in Nature between them, when immediately afterwards he calls him *the express Image* or *Character* of the Father's *Person*. (See also Dr. *Owen* on the Place.)

† *By the Word of his Power* seems to mean by the Word of *his own* Power, *by whom all Things consist.* But whether we refer it to his *own* or his *Father*'s Power, 'tis in Effect all one, since the divine Power of the Father and Son is really the same in both: And if we refer it to the *Father*'s Power, this shews that the Father's making the Worlds by the Son, *ver.* 2, no more denotes an inferior Instrumentality

in himself, and divinely qualified for, and worthy of the highest Honour; When through the Dignity of his Person he, as our great High Priest, preferable to all that went before him of the Order of *Aaron* *, had alone, in his own Person, made an actual and complete Atonement for our Sins, to purge us from their Guilt, and take them away, not by any Oblation of other expiatory Sacrifices, which were insufficient for it, but *by the Sacrifice of himself*, (Heb. ix. 26.) He then, in consequence of this, and in the Virtue of his own Blood, by Office-Right, in Correspondence to his original Dignity, ascended in our Nature into the Holy Place, even Heaven itself, (*Chap.* ix. 12) to take Possession, as a Priest upon his Throne, (*Zech.* vi. 13). of the highest Dignity and Glory, which may be represented in figurative Terms, after the Manner of Men, by his sitting with Quietness and Safety, Preeminence and Grandeur at the Right Hand of God the Father, whose Majesty and Greatness are display'd with the utmost Magnificence and Lustre in the upper World. (See the Note on *Acts* vii. 55.)

4 *Being made so much better than the Angels, as he hath by Inheritance obtained a*

4. This glorious Person, by whom God has spoken to us in these last Days, infinitely surpasses, not only all the antient Prophets and Priests, but also the highest Angels themselves; he being in his divine Nature †, and Office-Capacity,

strumentality of the Son in creating them, than the Son's *upholding all Things by the Word* of his *Father's* Power denotes an inferior Instrumentality of the Father's Power in upholding them; but that the same divine Power is exerted by each of them in both those Operations.

* As the Apostle had shewn in the two preceding Verses, that Christ is more excellent than all *the Prophets* that went before him; so he here suggests his transcendant Excellency above all *the Levitical Priests*, which is the grand Argument of this Epistle, while the prophetic and kingly Offices are here and there touch'd in the Process of it; and so he speaks of Christ's *purging our Sins*, which is to be understood in a sacrificial Sense, as in *Lev.* xvi. 30, with respect to his taking away the Guilt of Sin by his expiating Blood, whereby *the Conscience is purged from dead Works to serve the living God*, in Opposition to *the Blood of Bulls and of Goats* that was insufficient for this Purpose, and *only sanctified to the purifying of the Flesh*. Chap. ix. 13, 14.

† The Apostle having begun with considering *the Person of Christ*, both in his *Divine* and *Office*-Characters, to shew his Preference to the antient *Prophets* and *Priests*, ver. 1—3, He keeps up the View of both those Characters, in comparing Christ with the *Angels*, to shew how far he also excels them. Accordingly some of the following Quotations, to prove his Superiority to the Angels, relate immediately to his *divine Nature*, and others to his *mediatorial Office*, which is founded upon it, and could not be discharged, and render'd effectual without it; and all together, in one or the other, and unitedly in both those Considerations of him, are an uncontrollable and illustrious Evidence of the superlative Dignity of the *Person* of Christ above the most exalted Angels. And it was highly proper to demonstrate his Pre-eminence above them; because the *Jews* insisted on, and boasted of the Excellency of their Law, as it was delivered by the Ministration of Angels according to what is said about it, *Chap.* ii. 2, compared with *Deut.* xxxiii. 2, *Ps.* lxviii. 17, *Acts* vii. 53, and *Gal.* iii. 19: And though, as I apprehend, Christ was the *Jehovah* that delivered the Law by the Disposition of Angels, which gave a divine Authority to it; yet the Gospel appears to be still more glorious, and the Neglect of it is spoken of as to be still more dreaded, *Chap.* ii. 2, 3; because God spoke it to us, not by the Ministry of Angels as he did the Law, but immediately in and by the Ministry of his own incarnate Son: For the Stress of the Argument lies, not in any Difference as to the divine Authority of the original Author of one and the other, which is the same, whether it were God the Father,

more excellent Name than they.

Capacity, which is founded upon it, alike superior to them, as he really and originally is so much more excellent than all the Angels in his own divine Person, * and is so by the Appointment and Constitution of the Father, as God-Man Mediator; and is manifested to be as much above them in his State of Exaltation, as is answerable to that more glorious, emphatical and significant Title, which he is honoured with by the Father himself, (*ver.* 5.) and which he has received by Right of Inheritance, as the natural and appointed Heir of all Things; (See the Paraphrase on *ver.* 2.) a Title far more excellent, than any Name that belongs, or ever was given with such Peculiarity and Eminence, to any, even of the highest Angels. The special Name or Title which I mean, and which is expressive of the Dignity of his Person, and appropriated to him, is that of the *Son of God.*

5 For unto which of the Angels said he at any Time, Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

5. For, to consider this Matter first with respect to his *Divine Nature*, To which of the Angelic Spirits, even of the highest Order and Dignity amongst them, did God ever speak with an Emphasis and Peculiarity, as he did to our Lord Jesus Christ; when, referring to the formal Reason of his Sonship, he said to him (*Ps.* ii. 7.) Thou art my essential Son, whom I have begotten from Eternity; which, for unalterable Permanency of Duration, may be called one continued unsuccessive Day. † And again, with respect to his *Office-Capacity*, correspondent to his original Sonship, Of

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Father, or God the Son, that delivered the Law at Mount *Sinai* by the Ministration of Angels; but it lies in the vastly *superior Excellency of the Son* as the *immediately* ministring Person, by whom the Gospel is spoken to us.

* The Word, (γενόμενος) here translated *made*, very often signifies and is render'd *is*; and so it expresses what Christ really is, and may respect his being originally in himself more excellent than the Angels; at other Times it signifies *manifested to be*, as it might be rendered in *Mat.* v. 45, and *John* xv. 8; and so Christ's being more excellent than the Angels may relate to the *Evidence* and *Demonstration*, with which God manifests or declares him to be so: And at other Times it signifies *made* or *ordained*, as in *Mark* ii. 27; and so Christ's being made more excellent than the Angels, may refer to the Office-Exaltion of his incarnate Person, after he had, in his State of Humiliation been made lower than the Angels.

† In the former Part of this Verse God the Father speaks of what he had already done in begetting his Son; but, in this last Clause he speaks of what he would be to him. Accordingly I take the *former* of these to relate to his *natural Sonship* by an eternal inconceivable Generation, which was manifested by his Resurrection; (See the Note on *Chap.* v. 8.) and the *second* to his Father's *Acknowledgment and Treatment* of him as his *incarnate Son and Mediator:* And so the Argument for the superior Dignity of his Person proceeds in this Verse from his Divine to his Office-Character, and from thence to both these Considerations of him jointly, *ver.* 6——9; and it winds up with a strong Proof of his being indeed the great, eternal and unchangeable God, that made the Earth and the Heavens, and will remain the same after they shall all perish, *ver.* 10——12. (See the Note there.) Mr. *Peirce* in his Note upon the last Quotation in this Verse has, I think, abundantly prov'd by several Arguments, that it is taken from the Prophecy in 2 *Sam.* vii. 14, and 1 *Chron.* xvii. 13, where the Words are exactly the same. The only Difficulty that seems to lie against this Interpretation is what follows 2 *Sam.* vii. 14, where 'tis added, *If he commit Iniquity I will chasten him with the Rod of Men, and with the Stripes of the Children of Men*, which is by no Means applicable to Christ himself. But that learned Writer sufficiently answers this, by showing that, according to the Meaning and frequent Use of the *relative* Term, (אשר) even where the demonstrative Pronoun before it is omitted, it ought to be render'd *whosoever*, meaning whosoever of the *Messiah's Children commit Iniquity I will chasten him*, &c.; and thus this very Prophecy is commented upon in *Ps.* lxxxix. 30—33.

which of the Angels has God the Father ſaid, as he did of Chriſt in another Prophecy of him (2 *Sam.* vii. 14. and 1 *Chron.* xvii. 13.) I will own myſelf to be his Father and him to be my Son, by an extraordinary Conception and Birth in Human Nature, and will treat him accordingly, with eminent Tokens of my peculiar Love, Protection and Care of him, whom I will exalt to his Kingdom? (See 1 *Chron.* xvii. 14, and *Luke* i. 32, 33.)

6 And again, when he bringeth in the firſt-begotten into the World, he ſaith, And let all the Angels of God worſhip him.

6. And again, to ſhow that he is in reality a divine Saviour, infinitely more excellent than the higheſt Angels, we have another Teſtimony to him in *Pſ.* xcvii. 7.* ; where, with Reference to God's introducing this Lord and Heir of all into our World at his miraculous Birth of a Virgin, in order to his going through the Work of Mediation upon Earth, and his conſequent Exaltation to the Throne of his Glory in Heaven, and his coming to judge the World at the laſt Day, God the Father commanded even all his holy Angels themſelves to offer religious Adoration to him, as to his own incarnate Son, and to pay all divine Honours to him, as ſuch; which ſuppoſes him to be God their Creator, and them to be the Work of his Hands, otherwiſe they would never have been order'd to pay ſuch Homage to him, as is the unalienable Right of Deity. (See *Matt.* iv. 10.)

7 And of the Angels he ſaith, Who maketh his Angels Spirits, and his Miniſters a Flame of Fire.

7. And ſtill further to ſhow how much the Angels are beneath him, God, ſpeaking concerning them, ſays, He makes thoſe nobleſt of all his Creatures, even thoſe ſpiritual and intellectual Beings † the Angels themſelves, his Servants to execute his Will and Commandments with Strength, Speed,

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* *And again* ſeems not to relate to God's bringing Chriſt into the World again at his Reſurrection, as ſome ſuppoſe: For the Word (οικουμενη) here render'd *the World*, when put abſolutely without any other Addition, conſtantly relates to *this habitable Earth* or *World*, as Dr. *Owen* obſerves; or to ſome Part of it, ſuch as the land of *Judea*, or the *Roman Empire:* But the Reſurrection of Chriſt was rather in order to his *leaving this World, and going to the Father,* (*John* xvi. 28.) than to his being *brought again* into this World, from which his Body was never removed, and in which he never afterwards appeared, except to his own Diſciples. *Again* therefore, by a uſual Trajection or tranſpoſing of the *Greek* Sentence, may rather be joined to *he ſays,* as our Verſion has put it; and ſo it bears the ſame Senſe, and is taken in the ſame Way, as in the foregoing Verſe, to lead us on to another Teſtimony concerning Chriſt, relating to the Time when he was brought into our World, in order to his erecting a Kingdom of Grace in it, and being advanced to the Throne of his Glory, as Head over all Things to the Church; and ſo God's bringing him into the World includes his Incarnation, and all that followed upon it in his Life, Death, Reſurrection, Exaltation and Effuſion of his Spirit, for the ſetting up of his Throne and Kingdom in this lower World, and exerciſing Dominion over all, till he ſhall come to Judgment. Accordingly *Pſ.* xcvii. 7, from whence theſe Words are quoted, begins *ver.* 1, with calling *upon the Earth, and the Multitude of Iſles to rejoice* on Account of *his reigning*, who is here called *the Firſt-begotten,* and in *Pſ.* lxxxix. 27, *the firſt born, higher than the Kings of the Earth,* though none were ſo begotten or born afterwards, to intimate his Pre-eminence, and that there was none before him, in Alluſion to the Dignity of the firſt born under the Law, who was ſo called, whether any were born after him, or not.

† 'Tis plain that *Pſ.* civ. 4. from whence this Quotation is made, ſpeaks, as 'tis here render'd *of*, and not *to* the Angels; and tho' the Word in the *Greek* (προς) moſt commonly ſignifies *to*; yet 'tis ſometimes uſed for *of* or *concerning*, as it might be render'd in *Mark* xii. 12, and *Rom.* x. 21. And as *Spirits* (πνευματα) ſignify alſo *Winds*, it ſeems moſt natural to ſuppoſe, that *the Angels* in the firſt Clauſe are com-

Speed, and Activity like the Winds; and makes those, his ministring Spirits, fervent, powerful and penetrating in their Agency, like the very Lightning, or any Flame of Fire.

8 *But unto the Son* he saith, *Thy Throne, O God,* is *for ever and ever: A Sceptre of Righteousness is the Sceptre of thy Kingdom.*

8. But in much loftier Strains of Language, God in the Scripture says to his only begotten and eternal Son, (*Ps.* xlv. 6, 7.) As, O thou truly divine Person, * thy natural and essential Dominion, which is emblematically represented by a Prince's sitting on his Throne, is everlastingly and unchangeably the same, without Beginning or End; † So thy mediatorial Throne of Government shall remain, 'till all its Ends be thoroughly accomplished; and the Honour of it, together with the complete Happiness of thy Subjects, shall abide for ever and ever, even after the Manner of administring thy Kingdom on Earth shall cease, and thou shalt have delivered it up to the Father, that according to the original State of Things God, inclusive of all the divine Persons, may be all in all that farther pertains to it. (See the Note on 1 *Cor.* xv. 24—28.) The Rule which thou bearest in thy Kingdom is full of Equity, Truth and Holiness, that run through all thy Laws and Government: Thou art intitled to this Government upon Principles of Righteousness; and thy Reign, of which a Scepter is the Royal Ensign, is in all Rectitude, and with sanctifying Influence over righteous Subjects.

9 *Thou hast loved Righteousness, and hated Iniquity: Therefore God,* even *thy God, hath anointed thee with the Oil of Gladness above thy Fellows.*

9. Yea, such is thy regal Dignity, and thy Worthiness of it, that not only thy Laws and Administrations, but thy Heart and Nature are infinitely pure and holy: Thou hast the greatest Delight in Holiness, and hast thyself fulfilled all Righteousness; and thou art of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity without the utmost Detestation of it, and hast taken away its Guilt from thy Subjects by thy atoning Blood, that thou mightest subdue its Power in them by thy Spirit and Grace. On account of all this, God who prepared thee a Body, and is thy Covenant-God, and has entered into Engagements with thee as God-Man Mediator, and so in thy Office-Capacity is thy God, he has inaugurated and actually invested thee with all Fulness of Authority, in exalting thee *with his right Hand* to be *a Prince and a Saviour*; (*Acts* v. 31.) and has enrich'd thee with an unmeasurable Fulness of the Spirit, that thou mightest give Gifts to Men, and shed them forth abundantly; (*Ephes.* iv. 8. and *Acts* ii. 33.)

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compared to the *Winds*, as they are in the next to *a Flame of Fire*; And since the Apostle design'd to show the Preference of Christ to the Angels in their Ministration of the Law, *Chap.* ii. 2, 3, perhaps here may be some Reference to their Agency in forming the terrible Thunders, Lightnings and Tempest at Mount *Sinai*, which are spoken of in *Ex.* xix. 16, and *Heb.* xii. 18.

* *O God* (ὁ Θεὸς) in the singular Number is never used absolutely, or without a Restriction to some peculiar Consideration of it, as 'tis here, of any but the only true God.

† Though I take Christ's *mediatorial* Throne to be most immediately intended in this Passage; yet as this is founded upon, and corresponds to his original Dominion as God, and he had been spoken of in his divine and mediatorial Characters in the preceding Verses, I thought proper to keep that in View, which in the strictest Sense is *for ever and ever*.

which,

which, in Allusion to the antient Modes of consecrating Prophets, Priests and Kings, may be express'd by his anointing thee with such an Unction, as is infinitely delightful to thee, and produces the most joyful Effects upon thy Subjects, even an Unction far more excellent and abundant, than ever was or will be given to any other, whether Prophet, Priest, or King, or Saint, or Angel, which in their Measure have been, are, or shall be respectively Partakers (μετοχοι) of Offices, Blessings and Joys with thee, and under thee.

10 And thou, Lord, in the Beginning hast laid the Foundation of the Earth: And the Heavens are the Works of thine Hands.

10. And to show that Christ is above all *titular* Gods, and had an original Right to universal Dominion, antecedent to what is now given him, in his complex Person and Office-Character, by special Dispensation, * It is further said of the Son. (*Ps.* cii. 25, 26, 27) Thou, Jehovah, in the Beginning, before any Creatures existed, which of old were not in Being, didst set fast the Earth, as on its Basis, that it might not be removed out of its Place: And all the Beauties, Glories and Furniture of the whole Fabrick of the Heavens, with all their pompous Hosts of Sun, Moon and Stars, are the curious Workmanship of thy infinite Wisdom and almighty Power.

11 They shall perish; but thou remainest: And they all shall wax old as doth a Garment;

11. Both the Earth and the Heavens, and all the Parts of this visible Creation, firm and durable as some of them now appear to be, are of a corruptible Nature, and in their Season shall certainly pass away, and be totally dissolved, as to their present Use and Form: (*Mat.* v. 18, and 2 *Pet.* iii. 7, 10—13.) But thou, O immortal Son of God, always hadst, still hast, and wilt have an abiding and unchangeable Existence. *Before the Mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the Earth and the World, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God*, as is said of the great Jehovah of *Israel*: (*Ps.* xc. 2.) And as we daily see that all

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* The Word *and* is the Apostle's *own*, for connecting this with the foregoing Testimony, it not being in *Ps.* cii. 25, from whence this Passage is quoted; and the Form of Address is just the same all along through both these recited Testimonies, without the least Intimation or Appearance of a different Person's being introduced in the Application of them, *Thy Throne. O God, is for ever and ever*, &c. *And thou, Lord, in the Beginning hast laid the Foundation of the Earth*, &c. Were we to suppose, with some, that this last Testimony refers not to God *the Son*, but to *the Father*, I own that, after all I have met with to support this Opinion, I can't see to what Purpose this Passage is mentioned at all, or how it any way suits the Design of the Argument in hand: But as 'tis an unquestionably just Description of *the only true God* in creating Work, 'tis very properly brought in here as applicable to *Christ*, to prevent all Cavils, as though he were to be considered only as an under-Agent, when it was said *ver.* 2, that *all Things were made by him*; and so 'tis much to the Apostle's Purpose to prove the Son's Original Right of Dominion, as Lord of all, because *he made the Worlds*, *ver.* 3; as also to show that he is every Way in *Nature*, as well as *Office*, far more excellent than the Angels and all Creatures whatsoever, and that the Creation of the World was to be ascribed to him, who is the Author of the Gospel; and not at all to the Angels, by whose Ministration the Law was given, as tho' they were employ'd in creating Work, according to the fond Imagination of some of the *Jews*: And that *Psalm* cii. from whence this Citation is made, relates to the *Messiah*, appears from several Verses in it, as particularly from *ver.* 13, 15, 16, 18, 22; and therefore this grand Description of God, as eternal and unchangeable, and as the Creator of all, may well be suppoied to belong to *the Person of Christ*, as the Apostle has here apply'd it.

the Creatures of this lower World grow old and gradually decay; so the Earth and the Heavens, with all the visible Things contained in them, shall wear out, and, at length, become unfit to answer their present Design, like an old rotten Garment.

12 *And as a Vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, and thy Years shall not fail.*

12. And as a Garment is easily put off, folded up and laid aside at a Man's Pleasure, when 'tis no further serviceable, and he has either done with it, or designs to turn it to a new Use; So thou, the Creator of all, wilt by thine Omnipotence, at the End of Time, as easily *roll the Heavens together as a Scroll, and move every Mountain and Island out of their Places:* (Is. xxxiv. 4. and Rev. vi. 14.) And by thy Almighty Power thou wilt make such a wonderful Alteration in them, that, instead of being annihilated and utterly destroyed, they shall be changed into *new Heavens* and a *new Earth, wherein dwells Righteousness,* (2 Pet. iii. 13.) when thou wilt unfold them again for the still greater Glory of thy Name. But thou thyself art eternally and invariably the same in thy Being and Perfections, *without Beginning of Days or End of Life:* And in thy Love and Care of thy People, and the Efficacy of thy Mediation, *Thou art the same Yesterday, to Day, and for ever.* (Heb. vii. 3, and xiii. 8.)

13 *But to which of the Angels said he at any Time, Sit on my right Hand, until I make thine Enemies thy Footstool?*

13. But which of the Angels can once be compared with this glorious Saviour in his infinite Dignity as *that* appears from what has been observed about his divine Nature and Office-Exaltation? Which of them, even of the highest of these excellent Spirits, has God the Father thought worthy of so transcendent an Honour, as ever to say to any one of them, as he did to his incarnate Son, (*Ps.* cx. 2.) Sit thou enthroned in Majesty, Power and Glory at my right Hand, and continue thou to reign on thy mediatorial Throne, till Sin, Satan, Death, and all thine and thy Churches Enemies be actually and absolutely subdued, and 'till thou triumph over them, like vanquish'd Rebels under thy Feet, according to my Appointment?

14 *Are they not all ministring Spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be Heirs of Salvation?*

14. On the contrary, Are not all these spiritual Beings placed in an infinitely lower Rank, (*Ps.* ciii. 21.) even the most eminent of them, as but Messengers and Servants of Christ, whom he commissions and employs merely in a ministerial Way, as formerly in delivering the Law at Mount *Sinai,* so continually still in Offices of Protection, Care and Kindness, and in many important Services in Life and Death, for the Benefit of those that, by Inheritance thro' Grace, are appointed to, and (μέλλοντας κληρονομεῖν) shall actually inherit eternal Life under him, and in his Right, who is their Head, and the prime Heir of all Things? (*ver.* 2.)

RECOL-

RECOLLECTIONS.

With what Satisfaction may we depend upon the divine Authority of both the Old and New Testament! God who formerly spake to the Fathers by the Prophets, now speaks to us by his Son; he began and gradually carried on various Revelations at different Times, in distinct Parcels, and by several Ways and Means, which we have an Account of in the Old Testament, till he compleated them in the New. How thankful should we be that our Lot is cast under the Gospel-Dispensation! This is the clearest, the fullest, the best and last Discovery of the Mind and Will of God, that is to be expected in our World. And how glorious is the Representation it gives us of Christ in his divine Nature and mediatorial Office! He is *essentially* the same God with the Father, and yet *personally* distinct from him, as the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person, and is his eternal only begotten Son; he is the Creator of Heaven and Earth, and all Things contained therein, and upholds them by the Word of his Power: And in his Office-Capacity he is the appointed Heir of all Things, in and by whom we inherit the Blessings of Grace and Glory. 'Tis he, and he only, that has taken away our Sins by the Sacrifice of himself, and is now exalted on his Throne, with the highest Dignity and Honour, at the Father's Right Hand; his Throne is for ever and ever; be is infinitely pure and spotless in himself, and righteous in all the Administrations of his Kingdom; he is fully invested with all Authority above whatever was or shall be conferred on any Prophet, Priest or King, Saint or Angel; and at the last Day he, who is the unchangeable God, will put an End to the present Frame of this World, and change it into another, that will be inexpressibly more excellent and glorious. How safe and happy then are the Saints under his Care! And what an Honour has he put upon them, in assuming their Nature, and exalting it in Union with his own divine Person in Heaven, and in ordering all the holy Angels to minister to them! O, with what Solemnity and Joy should they join with these celestial Spirits in paying all religious Adorations to him! And how dead should their Hearts be to this perishing World and all its Concerns, which wax old, and shall be laid aside like a useless worn-out Garment! But, after all the Changes of the present Scene of Things, they themselves shall inherit eternal Salvation with him.

CHAP. II.

The Apostle infers from what he had said about the Dignity of Christ's Person and Office, the Duty of stedfastly adhering to him and his Gospel, 1—4. *Reassumes his Argument about Christ's Pre-eminence above the Angels, and shews that his Sufferings are no Objection against it,* 5—9. *Opens the Ground and Reason of his Sufferings, and the Fitness of that Dispensation, which laid out his Way through them to his Mediatorial Glory,* 10—13. *And leads us to the Incarnation of Christ, in Opposition to his assuming the Nature of Angels, as necessary to the Discharge of his priestly Office,* 14—18.

TEXT.	PARAPHRASE.
1 THerefore we ought to give the more earnest Heed	1. SINCE therefore Christ is such an excellent and divine Person, so far superior to all preceding Prophets, and even to the Angels themselves, as has now been proved;

to the Things which we have heard, lest at any Time we should let them *slip.*

proved; (*Chap.* i.) *. It, for this Reason, (δια τουτο) highly concerns us, in point of Duty and Interest, even all and every one of us, that live under this more eminently glorious Dispensation, than that delivered by *Moses* and by the Ministration of Angels, to attend the more diligently, affectionately and stedfastly unto; and, with humble reverential Faith and Love, to esteem, embrace, meditate and reflect upon, and seriously endeavour to make a suitable Use and Improvement of, the great and interesting Doctrines, which under the Gospel-State we have heard, as delivered to us in the Ministry of the Word; and to retain them carefully in our Hearts and Memories, and persevere in our holy Profession of them; lest, in some Season and Circumstances of Life, through the Corruption, Heedlessness, Treachery and Prejudices of our Hearts, the Temptations of Satan, and the Snares of this evil World, or through any other Means, we should be carried away from the Truth, or be forgetful Hearers of the Word, and suffer it to slip out of our Minds, like Water that runs out of a leaking Vessel †; or should suffer it to pass by us, as a Stream, without making any good Use of it; and so lose the Benefit of the Gospel, and perish under all its gracious Administrations.

2 *For if the Word spoken by Angels was stedfast, and every Transgression and Disobedience received a just Recompence of Reward;*

2. For if *Moses*'s Law, which was given at Mount *Sinai* by the Ministration of Angels, as Christ's Messengers and Servants to publish it, (*Acts* vii. 38, 53. See the Paraphrase there) was (βεβαιος) firm and valid, as established by divine Authority, with an awful Sanction to enforce it; and if every contemptuous Violation of any Precept of that Law, by a Sin of Omission or Commission; and every Act of wilful Disobedience to the Authority of God in it, were severely punished upon the Transgressor, who died without Mercy, as the righteous Retribution of his evil Deeds.

3 *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord,* and *was confirmed unto us by them that heard* him;

3. How then is it possible that any of us, who have heard the Gospel, should escape the dreadful Wrath of God? How can we in our Consciences expect to avoid Condemnation, or imagine that his Justice will excuse or spare us, or forbear executing the heaviest Vengeance upon us, and *that* without Mercy or Remedy, for all our Iniquities; and especially for our Refusals and Abuses of his Grace, and of the only Way of Pardon and eternal Life

* In this and the three following Verses the Apostle manifestly makes a practical Application of the foregoing Discourse, by way of Inference from it, as appears by the Particle *δια τουτο*, with which he introduces it; and such *Digressions* are very frequent in several other Parts of this Epistle, as we shall see in their Course.

† *Lest we should let them slip*, or, as the Margent renders it, (*παραρρυωμεν*) *run out*, is a beautiful Allusion to *leaking Vessels*, with which our treacherous Hearts and Memories may well be compared, or, perhaps, it may allude to Waters that flow by us, but are made no Use of; and in either of these Views it may import Defects in ourselves, through which we get no saving Advantage by the Gospel.

through Jesus Christ; if, through Unbelief or Carelesness, we despise and reject, or disregard and do not embrace the Word of Salvation, (*Acts* xiii. 26, and *Ephes.* i. 13) or the Gospel, which brings Salvation to lost Sinners, (*Tit.* ii. 11) as it displays its Reality, Nature and Excellency, shews us the Way, and is the Means of obtaining it, and is *the Power of God unto Salvation to every one that believes?* (Rom. i. 16.) A Salvation, not of a temporal and worldly, but of a spiritual, heavenly and eternal Nature; a Salvation which is the Contrivance of such amazing Counsels of Wisdom and Grace, and is procured by so great a Price, and consists of Deliverance from so great Sin and Mis'ry, and of Advancement to so great Holiness, Happiness and Glory; and a Salvation so complete and wonderfully comprehensive of all Blessings, answerable to our utmost Wants and Desires, as surpasses all Comprehension, Thought or Expression; The first clear Publication of which, without the Vail of Types and Shadows *, was begun to be made personally and immediately by the Lord Jesus Christ himself in the Days of his Ministry upon Earth, who is the Son of God, and the Lord of Angels; and was further carried on, and certified to us of the *Jewish* Nation, by many honest, undesigning, faithful Witnesses, and *that* under divine Inspiration, such as the Evangelists, Apostles and others, who themselves heard him deliver these blessed Tidings of so great Salvation, which he came to procure, and bestow upon them that should believe in him.

4 God also bearing them Witness, both with Signs and Wonders, and with divers Miracles, and Gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own Will?

4. To assure us of the infallible Certainty of their Witness, God himself also gave the most unquestionable Testimony to their Integrity, and to the Truth of what they said, in an extraordinary Manner, by abundance of miraculous Operations and Effects, which he wrought by them; Operations which may be called *Signs* †, as they were Signals of his owning and being with them, and were Seals of the Doctrine they preached; and may be called *Wonders*, as they were uncommon and amazing Appearances of God's almighty Power and Goodness; and may truly be called various Kinds of *Miracles*, as they were wrought by a divine Agency, beyond, and even contrary to the ordinary Course

* 'Tis with great Propriety that the Apostle says, *which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord:* For though Christ opened the Gospel-Dispensation in his personal Ministry, he did not preach the Whole of it; because several Things pertaining to it were to be accomplished by his Death, Resurrection and Ascension to Heaven, and were not proper to be fully revealed; nor could they be spoken of as actually subsisting, nor be well received, till he went to the Father, and shed down his Spirit from on high: Accordingly he said to his Disciples, *John* xvi. 12, 13, *I have yet many Things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now; howbeit, when the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth.*

† *Signs, Wonders* and *Miracles* seem to be much of the same Import; but may be expressed under those several Terms for Reasons suggested in the Paraphrase, which gives us a different View of what we more generally call *Miracles*, even while we distinguish them from what are commonly called *the Gifts of the Spirit.*

of Nature; such as healing the Sick, casting out Devils, and raising the Dead, merely by speaking a Word: And God still further bore Witness to these his faithful Servants, and confirmed their Testimony, in a rich Variety of supernatural Gifts of the Holy Ghost, such as the Gifts of Prophecy, Wisdom, Knowledge and Utterance; and the Gift of Tongues, and the Interpretation of Tongues; yea, and the Gift of conveying these excellent Endowments to other Believers, as has frequently been done by the laying on of the Apostles Hands: All which miraculous Attestations from God are not only equal to, but far more excellent than those, that he shewed in Confirmation of the Law of *Moses*; (Deut. vi. 22) and are distributed in all their different Kinds and Degrees to one and another of these Witnesses, and to every one that has any of them, according to the good Pleasure and sovereign Operation of God by his Spirit, who, with the same divine Sovereignty, *divides them to every Man severally, as he will.* (1 Cor. xii. 11.)

5 For unto the Angels hath he not put in Subjection the World to come, whereof we speak.

5. But to return to the Comparison between Christ and the holy Angels, This glorious Person, I say, is far superior in his *Office*, *Character*, as well as in *himself*, to any of them: For how much soever they were employed in giving the Law, (*ver.* 2) or are made use of as ministring Spirits to the Heirs of Salvation, (*Chap.* i. 14) God has not given them any Authority or Dominion over the New Testament-Church, and the Things belonging to it; which, being to succeed the *Mosaic* Dispensation, were commonly stiled by the *Jews*, *the World to come.* God has no where spoke of bringing the Gospel-Church into any Subjection to the Angels, as if they were to be Lords and Rulers over it, or as if its Doctrines, Ordinances and Institutions, Privileges and Blessings, were to be derived from them, or they were to publish and dispense its Affairs; which are the Things that I am speaking of, and shall further insist upon in this Epistle, as more excellent than any that ever went before them.

6 But one in a certain Place testified, saying, What is Man, that thou art mindful of him? Or the Son of Man, that thou visitest him?

6. But all these Things are owing to, and immediately depend upon the incarnate Son of God himself, of whom an inspired Writer of the Old Testament speaks in a certain Paragraph, (*Ps.* viii. 4, 5, 6) where, contemplating the magnificent Works of God, he broke out into this rapturous and admiring Exclamation, saying, How mean and inconsiderable a Creature is Man in himself, and compared with the vast Expanse of the Heavens, the Moon and Stars which thou hast ordained,* that thou should'st condescend to

* The *Eighth Psalm*, from whence this and the two following Verses are quoted, seems to have been composed by *David* in a clear, moon-shining and star light Night, when he was contemplating the wonderful Fabric of the Heavens; because in his magnificent Description of its Luminaries he takes no Notice of *the Sun*, the most glorious of them all. And it appears to me that the Word, here

to shew such Favour to him, as to dignify his Nature in the Incarnation of thy Son? Or what is the Nature of Man, considered merely as such, in the Messiah himself, whose distinguishing Character is the *Son of Man*, that thou should'st, for the sake of Mankind, raise him in human Nature to the Office of Mediation, and enrich him with thy Gifts and Graces, and assist and own him in his Work, and exalt him to his Throne and Kingdom, *and give him Power over all Flesh, that he might give eternal Life to as many as thou hast given him*; (John xvii. 2) and so by him should'st visit the human Race with such tender Mercy, as to *redeem thy People, and raise him up, as an Horn of Salvation for them in the House of thy Servant* David. (*Luke* i. 68, 69.)

7 Thou madest him a little lower than the Angels; thou crownedst him with Glory and Honour, and didst set him over the Works of thy Hands:

7. Thou, in Pursuit of this gracious and glorious Design, didst place this Son of Man for a small Season in a State of deep Humiliation, subject to Miseries in Soul and Body, and to Death itself, whereby, under thy Forsakings, his Condition was abundantly inferior to that of the holy Angels, who *always behold thy Face in Heaven*, (Mat. xviii. 10) and never die: (*Luke* xx. 36.) And when he had gone through a short Course of Humiliation, Obedience and Sufferings, even unto the most ignominious and painful Death upon Earth, Thou in Consequence of it, and in Recompence for it, didst raise him from the Dead, and advance him, like a King to his Throne, and solemnly inaugurate and invest him, like a Prince at his Coronation, in all mediatorial Dignity and Authority, Honour and Glory, at thine own Right Hand in the highest Heavens; (*Phil.* ii. 8, 9) and didst constitute him the absolute and universal Lord and Sovereign of all the Creatures which thou hast made, (*Ephes.* i. 21, and 1 *Pet.* iii. 22) that he might govern and order, over-rule and restrain them, and make

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here cited had a principal and ultimate Reference to the *Messiah*, who is really a Man, and is spoken of as *Man*, and characterized as *the Son of Man* in the *Psalms* and other Parts of the Old Testament, (*Ps.* lxxx. 17, *Dan.* vii. 13, *Zech.* vi. 12, and xiii. 7) as well as is called *the Man Christ Jesus*, in the New Testament, (1 *Tim.* ii. 5) and often spoke of himself as *the Son of Man*: For if the following Words in *Ps.* viii. were directly and confinedly meant of the *first Adam*, or of his Posterity *in general*, the Order of them would most naturally have been, *he was crowned with Glory and Honour, and made a little lower than the Angels*, since his Honour was before his Fall and Abasement; and as the Words (βραχύ τι) *a little lower*, ver. 7 might, I think, be better render'd, as they are in the Margent, and *Acts* v. 34, a *little while*, or *for a little Space*, it should rather have been said, if applied to *Adam*, that he was a *little while crowned with Glory and Honour*, than that he was a *little while made lower than the Angels*; since his Glory and Honour was only for a small Space of Time before his Fall, and his being made lower than the Angels was continued all along after it. But as Christ was made not *a little only*, but *much lower* than the Angels for *a few Years*, as to his State and Condition in the Days of his Humiliation upon Earth; so he is now crowned with Glory and Honour to continue in his exalted State for ever: And how applicable soever some of the quoted Passages, relating to *Dominion*, might be to *Adam* and his Posterity in general; yet in their complete and highest Sense, they could belong to none but the *second Adam*, as the universal Lord and Governor of all his Creatures, and the triumphant Conqueror of all his Enemies; nor would the Apostle's Quotation of them have been at all to his Purpose, unless he had understood them to have been spoken of Christ.

them subserve the great Designs of his Kingdom, as the *Head over all Things to the Church*. (Ephes. i. 22.)

8 Thou hast put all Things in Subjection under his Feet. For in that he put all in Subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all Things put under him.

8. Thou hast subjected all thy Works, from the highest to the lowest of them, to his Dominion, that they may be intirely at his Disposal; and hast given him an absolute Power over all his and his Church's Enemies, Sin, Satan and Death, that he may conquer, subdue and triumph over them, like Slaves and Captives under his Feet; may disarm them of all their Force; may trample upon them with Indignation and Contempt, like the Dirt under his Feet; and may execute his righteous Wrath upon them *. —This Testimony of the *Psalmist* shews that he had a higher View, than to that original Dominion, which was given to Man over the Creatures of this lower World: For (as is there said *absolutely* and *universally*) when God put all Things whatsoever, without Exception or Limitation, under him, it is evident that there is no Work of his Hands, no Creature in Heaven or Earth, nor any Affair relating to them, nor consequently to the Gospel-Church, that is not brought into Subjection to him. But we plainly see, by Observation and Experience, that in so long a Time as from the Creation of the World to this very Day, neither Mankind in general, nor any one of them in particular, has an absolute and universal Dominion over all Things; and therefore these Words, *Thou hast put all Things in Subjection under him*, cannot be applied in their full Extent to *Adam*, or any of his natural Descendents †: And, notwithstanding that full Grant of Authority and Dominion, which is made to *our Lord Jesus* himself, It must indeed be allow'd, that we as yet do not see that, in *Fact*, all Things are actually so reduced under him, as to have put an End to all the Opposition of his and his Peoples Enemies; the Time for this being not yet come.

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the Angels, for the Suffering of Death, crowned with Glory and Honour; that he by the Grace of God

9. But (which cannot be said of any other Man) we certainly know from the Testimonies of inspired Writers, whom God bore Witness to, by divers Miracles and Gifts of the Holy-Ghost, (*ver.* 4) and by the great and wonderful Effects of their Doctrine upon the Hearts and Lives of innumerable Converts from among *Jews* and *Gentiles*, thro' the attending Power of the Spirit, which is shed down abundantly from the exalted Saviour; and we see by Faith

* Here ends the Apostle's Quotation from the *Psalms*, and what follows is his own arguing upon it.

† Dr. *Owen* and others understand this *Him* to relate to *Man in general*, in Distinction from *Jesus*, who is mentioned, as they apprehend, in Opposition to this *Him* at the Beginning of the next Verse; and so the Apostle denies that all Things are put under him: But *Beza*, *Piscator*, Mr. *Pierce* and others understand this *Him* as relating to *Christ*; and so the last Clause of this Verse may be consider'd as an *Objection* against his absolute and unlimited Dominion, which is answered in the next Verse, as seems to be intimated by the Word *yet*, (οὔπω) *We see not yet all Things put under him*, which implies that the Time is coming when they shall be so. Now, though I incline most to this *last* Sense, I would not be peremptory in it; and therefore have included both.

that

should taste Death for every Man.

that the Lord Jesus, who for a little while, (See the Note on *ver.* 6) during the few Years of his Incarnation upon Earth, was placed in a Condition far inferior to the holy Angels, that he might undergo the most terrible and abasing Sufferings, even unto Death; we are well assured, I say, that now in his human Nature, as the Reward of his Sufferings and Death, he is actually exalted to his heavenly Throne, and is there incircled with the highest Honours, and possessed of all the Majesty and Glory, Dignity, Authority and Power of his mediatorial Kingdom, in which he must reign till all his Enemies be effectually subdued under his Feet. (1 *Cor.* xv. 25) And as by the gracious Appointment of God, in his infinite Love and Good-will to Men, Christ tasted the bitter Cup of Death,* by actually dying in the Room and Stead of every one of the *many Sons* (ver. 10) that belong to him, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*; and by experimentally knowing the Sorrows of that tremendous Death, which their Sins deserved; so he, having done this, is exalted to all the Honours of his Throne, that he might be in full Capacity to pursue and accomplish the great End of his Death, in bringing them all safe to Glory.

10 *For it became him, for whom are all Things, and by whom are all Things, in bringing many Sons unto Glory, to make the Captain of their Salvation perfect thro' Sufferings.*

10. For how offensive soever the Doctrine of a suffering Messiah be to the carnal *Jews*, who looked for a temporal, and not a spiritual Salvation by him; It was every Way right and fit, decent, decorous, and agreeable to the Justice and Holiness, Wisdom and Goodness, and indeed to all the Perfections of God, who is the ultimate End, *for whom*, and the first Cause, *by whom*, all Things whatsoever were created, and the whole Scheme of Salvation was formed: It was, I say, infinitely becoming the great God himself, for the Vindication of the Rights and Honour of his holy Nature, Law and Government, in his Way of bringing an innumerable Multitude (*Rev.* vii. 9) of adopted and regenerated Sons to all the Blessedness and Glory of the heavenly

* *Tasting Death* is an *Hebraism* for *dying*: But the Death of Christ was not *after* he was crowned with Glory and Honour, much less was he crowned, that he might taste Death, as the Order of these Words may seem to intimate; for the Scripture every where speaks of his Death as preceding his Exaltation. And therefore it is most consonant to the Truth, and to the Apostle's Design, to understand, with Mr *Peirce*, that here is such an *Ellipsis* or *Syllepsis*, as is to be met with both in profane and sacred Writers, and is a Figure of Speech that supplies the Sense, though not exactly according to the Structure of the Words; and so it may stand thus, *Jesus was crowned with Glory and Honour, that, by the Grace of God having tasted Death, he might save every Man.*—But that learned Writer (notwithstanding his Notion of universal Redemption) further observes that *every Man*, for whom Christ tasted Death, cannot be here meant of *all Mankind*; but that the Nature of the Argument, and the Scope of the Context manifestly carry it under a Limitation to all those, who were before called the *Heirs of Salvation*, Chap. i. 14, and are all along, after the Verse before us, called, *the many Sons* who *were to be brought to Glory*, *the Sanctified*, *Christ's Brethren*, and *the Church*; and we may add, *the Children which God had given him*, ver. 10—14. It also might be designed to show that this Favour was not intended to be confined to the *Jews*, but to be extended likewise to the *Gentiles*.

venly State, to prepare his only begotten Son for this Work, as the Prince, Leader and Author of eternal Salvation, * the whole Accomplishment of which is lodged in his Hands, and to perfect the Consecration of him to his Office, as a Priest upon his Throne, by Means of his atoning Sufferings and Death on their Behalf, and in their Stead, that *as Sin has reigned unto Death, so Grace might reign through Righteousness to eternal Life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.* (Rom. v. 21.)

11 *For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified*, are *all of one. For which Cause he is not ashamed to call them Brethren,*

11. For both *the Redeemer*, who has taken away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself, that its Guilt may be expiated and its Defilement removed, † and *the Redeemed*, whose Sins are purged away by his Blood and Spirit, and who are thereby devoted to God, and qualified for acceptably worshipping and serving him, are all *of one Blood*, (Acts xvii. 26.) Partakers of one and the same human Nature from one common Parent; Christ having assumed their Nature into personal Union with himself, and *that* in the same State and Condition of Weakness, Affliction and Mortality with themselves, Sin only excepted, (*ver.* 17, and *Chap.* iv. 15.) that he might have something to offer, and they might have the Benefit of it; ‖ and they are all of *one heavenly Father*, under a wise, holy and gracious Constitution, whereby they are *legally one* and included in *one Covenant*. And therefore, great and glorious as Christ is, and mean and contemptible as they are, he does not disdain, but condescends to take them into the near and endearing Relation of Brethren to himself, who is *the first-born among many Brethren*, (Rom. viii. 29.) and to own them with Pleasure under that Relation, as he did after his Resurrection, (*John* xx. 17.) and will publickly do in the Day of Judgment. (*Mat.* xxv. 40.) And this cor-

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* *The Captain of Salvation* (αρχηγος της σωτηριας) properly signifies *the Leader*, and is rendered *the Prince*, and *the Author*, (Acts iii. 15, and v. 31, and Heb. xii. 2.) which are the only Places besides in the New Testament, where this Term is used; and in all these Places 'tis apply'd to *Christ*: And this Captain of Salvation being *made perfect*, according to different Acceptations of the Word, (τελειωσαι, which is sometimes rendered *to perfect*, (Chap. vii. 19, and ix. 9.) and at others *to consecrate*, Chap. vii. 28.) may relate to his being both completely *fitted* for, and *consecrated* to that Part of his Office, which he was to carry on in Heaven, and for the fulfilling of which he was crown'd with the Glory and Honour mentioned in the preceding Verse.

† *Sanctifieth* and *Sanctified* (ο αγιαζων και οι αγιαζομενοι) are, I think, constantly used through this Epistle in the *sacrificial* Sense, with a Reference to legal Purifications for *Separation*, or *Dedication* to God, and being fitted for his Service; or for cleansing from the Guilt of Sin: But when they relate to the Sanctification of *Believers*, in Virtue of the Blood of Christ, as they do here, and in Chap. x. 10, 14, they may well be supposed to include also an *internal Work of Holiness*, which was signified by external Purifications with Water and Blood, (according to the more common Acceptation of these Words in other Epistles) as it was purchased by the Blood of Christ, and is effected in Consequence thereof by the Sanctification of the Spirit.

‖ *Of one* (εξ ενος) is both the *Masculine* and *Neuter* Gender, and may accordingly mean *of one Person*, or *of one Thing*, and *that* very consistently with each other, and with the Apostle's Argument; though their being all *of one Nature* seems to be most directly intended.—A learned Expositor has conjectur'd that *all of one* means that Christ and the Sanctified are all *of one Father Abraham*, as he and all Believers have the same Faith with *Abraham*. But though this may be a good Reason for Christ's *calling them Brethren*, I don't see how it flows that it became God in bringing many Sons to Glory, to make the Captain of their Salvation *perfect through Sufferings*, which is the very Thing that the former Part of this Verse is brought to prove.

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responds to the Representation, which was made in the prophetic Writings of his calling them *Brethren.*

12 *Saying, I will declare thy Name unto my Brethren, in the midst of the Church will I sing Praise unto thee.*

12. Saying to his Father, (*Ps.* xxii. 22.) I will make known the Glory of thy Perfections and Councils, Ways and Works, to the Honour of thy great Name, with reference to the Scheme of Salvation, by opening it first in my personal Ministry, and afterwards carrying it on in plainer and more extensive Discoveries, 'till it be perfected, in the Ministry of my Servants, and by the Illumination of my Spirit, that it may be fully manifested to thy Children, to whom I stand nearly related by Sameness of Nature and Covenant-Constitution, as my Brethren. I will joyfully celebrate † and publish the wondrous Praises of thy Love, to thy Glory among them, whom thou hast chosen, called and sanctified to be a peculiar Church and People unto thee.

13 *And again, I will put my Trust in him. And again, Behold, I, and the Children which God hath given me.*

13. And again, in another prophetic Representation of Christ, he is brought in as saying in the Language of *David*, his Type, (*Ps.* xviii. 2.) like one that has Communion with his Brethren in human Affections, Sufferings and Graces, as well as in Nature, I will place all my Trust and Confidence in the Lord, who is *my Rock, and my Fortress, and my Deliverer, my God, my Strength*; (as it follows in that *Psalm*) My Dependence shall be intirely upon him to maintain my Cause, to support me under, and carry me through all my Trials and Difficulties, to make me triumph over them, and to reward me for them in my own personal Exaltation, and in effectually bringing the many Sons to Glory, (*ver.* 10.) And with a like Acknowledgement of his Relation to them as Brethren, he says in another Place, (*Isa.* viii. 18.) Behold here am I, ready to do and suffer all that thou callest me to for the Redemption of the Children, whom thou in eternal Councils of Wisdom, Love and Grace hast given me, as my Property and Charge, that I might deliver them from all Evil, and sanctify them for thy Service, and for an Enjoyment of thee; and that I might own, and take Care of them, as my dear Brethren, amidst all the Scorn and Reproach of Men upon Earth, and conduct them safe to Heaven: And behold, I present them together with myself to thee, for thine Acceptance, and for their everlasting Happiness.

14 *Forasmuch then as the Children are Partakers of Flesh and*

14. Since then (ἐπεὶ οὖν) the Children which God had given to his Son to be saved by him, were of the human Race, and (κεκοινώνηκε) had Communion with the rest of Man-

† If *singing Praises* is to be taken *literally*, our Lord did this with his Disciples, the only Gospel-Church that he had then upon Earth, a little before his Death, when they *sung an Hymn* at the Close of the Institution and Celebration of the Eucharist. (*Mat.* xxvi. 30.) But if we take it in a laxer Sense, for *setting forth the Praises of* God's Name, this Christ has done, still does, and will continue to do through all Generations in the Church, by his Word and Spirit, in its various Ministrations and Ordinances of divine Worship.

Blood, he also himself likewise took Part of the same; that thro' Death he might destroy him that had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil;

kind in human Nature, as consisting not only of an immortal Soul, but likewise of a mortal Body of Flesh and Blood, which was capable of dying; he also, who had an eternal Pre-existence as God, condescended voluntarily to assume true human Nature with all its essential Properties, and natural, tho' sinless, Infirmities, into personal Union with himself, really and exactly according to their own Likeness; (παραπλησίως μετέσχε) and so was allied as a near Kinsman to them, that the Right of Redemption might lie in him, and that he, in the same Nature which sinned, might make a proper Satisfaction to the Law and Justice of God for it; to the End that (ἵνα) by Means of his meritorious Death, which he suffered in their Room and Stead, to take away their Sins and the Curse of the Law, and to purchase a Resurrection to eternal Life, he might vanquish and (καταργήσῃ) intirely overthrow, or make void the Power of that great destroying Adversary, the Devil, who, as a Murderer from the Beginning, was the Means of bringing Sin and Death upon them by the first Transgression; and, as an Executioner of divine Justice, had an Empire over Death to inflict it in a penal Way upon obstinate and incorrigible Sinners, whenever God might permit him; and to be afterwards their everlasting Tormentor in the second Death.

15 *And deliver them who through Fear of Death were all their Life time subject to Bondage.*

15. And when Satan thought to have triumphed over Christ himself, by bringing him into the Territories of Death, This Captain of Salvation utterly defeated him, as it were on his own Ground; and by that very Means, which seem'd of all others the most unlikely, and by which he himself seem'd to be overcome, he disarm'd that grand Adversary of all his Power, that in the Virtue of his own Death he might ransom all his Children from the Sting and Terrors of Death, and from its Dominion over them; and might, in the effectual Application of his Blood, actually free them from the Guilt and Power of Sin, and give them a compleate Victory and Triumph over Death itself; (1 *Cor.* xv. 26, 55, 56, 57.) even*them, who through their formidable Thoughts of Death, or of its dreadful Consequences, or of both, were all their Lives long before liable to be sadly inslaved in their own Minds, and afraid to die, whether they were *Jews* under the Terrors of the legal Dispensation, or *Heathens*, that had no Hope of a better World beyond the Grave.

16 *For verily he took not on him* the Nature of *Angels*; *but he took on him the Seed of Abraham.*

16. For to accomplish these important Ends, 'tis most certainly true, that our blessed Lord did not lay hold on the Nature of Angels, to take that into personal Union with himself, as though he had intended to recover any from among them, that fell from their original Rectitude and Happiness; * but, passing by the Angelic Nature, he graciously

* *Verily he took not on him the Nature of Angels* is understood by some to signify, according to the rendering in the Margin, *he did not take hold of the Angels* to help or rescue them; *but he took hold*

ciously condescended to lay hold on, and unite to himself, the far more inferior Nature of Man, and to give it a peculiar Subsistence in his own divine Person, as he derived it from the Patriarch *Abraham*, to whom God promised that *in his Seed all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed.* (Gen. xxii. 18, and xxvi. 4.)

17 *Wherefore in all Things it behoved him to be made like unto his Brethren; that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, in Things* pertaining *to God, to make Reconciliation for the Sins of the People.*

17. We may therefore infer from all this, that, in order to Christ's duly answering the great Design of his Office, as their Redeemer and Saviour, it was highly fit and needful, and in the Reason of Things every Way proper, that he should partake of their Nature in all Things that essentially belong to it, and should come under their Trials and Sufferings, and indeed should be in every Thing, as far as possible, in the like Condition with those Brethren of his, whom he was to bring safe to Glory; (*ver.* 10, 11.) that so by his own Experience of Sufferings, which he underwent for their Sakes, in their Nature and in their Stead, he might be the better qualified, and the more feelingly engaged, to act the Part of a compassionate, tender-hearted High Priest, and might be the more touchingly stirr'd up to acquit himself with all Fidelity, in the Discharge of his great Undertaking for them, with relation to what he was to do with God on their Behalf, in a Way of Satisfaction to his Justice, for healing the Breach which Sin had made between him and them, and procuring Peace and Reconciliation with God for them; whom he represented and acted for, as taken from among Men, and as therein typify'd by the *High Priest under the Law.* (See *Chap.* v. 1.)

18 *For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.*

18. And as the typical High Priest *could have Compassion on the ignorant, and on them that were out of the Way, for that he himself also was compassed about with Infirmities,* (Chap. v. 2.) This is most remarkably and eminently true of Christ: For, in as much as, and in the very Thing, (ἐν ᾧ) in which he himself underwent the severest Tribulations, when he was in a State of Trials and Sufferings from Satan and the World, from the Desertions of his Father and his own Disciples, and from the Reproaches and Persecutions of his Enemies, and his various Troubles in Soul and Body;

of the Seed of Abraham to help or rescue them. But though I would not wholly exclude that Sense, in Connection with the other, which lies in the *Text* of our *Version*; yet Christ's assuming *human Nature* in his Incarnation, and not the *Nature of Angels*, seems to be most immediately intended, answerable to the whole Scope of the Context: And these Words may be render'd, without the Supplement of *Nature*, which is added to the *Greek* in our Translation, *he did not take to him of the Angels*, that is, not any one of them; but *he took to him of the Seed of Abraham*; or, with the Supplement, *He did not take to him the Nature of Angels; but took to him the Nature of the Seed of Abraham*; where human Nature is express'd by the Seed of *Abraham*; because our Lord derived it from *Abraham*, according to Old-Testament-Prophecies concerning him; and because he therein had a peculiar Respect to the *spiritual Seed of Abraham*: And this might with Propriety enough be called *Christ's taking to him*, or *taking hold of*, (ἐπιλαμβάνεται) not the Nature of Angels, but the human Nature in the Line of *Abraham*; because in his Incarnation he assum'd human Nature into personal Union with himself, and so laid hold of it in the most intimate and endearing Manner possible, in order to his rescuing and saving it.

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He, having triumph'd over all these Sorts of Temptations in his own Person, is both capable, inclined and willing to support, comfort and relieve all his Brethren, that are exercised with any like Afflictions and Trials; as well remembring what he suffer'd by them, and well knowing how to make those dear Objects of his Sympathy and Compassion, as victorious over them, as he himself was.

Recollections.

How much more excellent and important is the Gospel of Christ, than the Law of *Moses!* *This* was indeed spoken by the Ministration of Angels, and was divinely established; but *that* began to be spoken immediately in Person by the incarnate Son of God himself, who is, both by Nature and Office, infinitely superior to the Angels in Heaven; and this blessed Gospel is confirmed to us by many faithful Witnesses, who heard it from his own Mouth, and were impower'd still farther to publish it, with infallible Certainty, in all its Extent and Glory; God himself at the same Time bearing Witness to the Truth of their Testimony by various Wonders, Miracles and Gifts of the Holy-Ghost, according to the good Pleasure of his Will. And O what a great Salvation, comprehensive of all spiritual and eternal Blessings, and surpassing all Thought, does the Gospel bring to them that by Faith receive it! With what Care and Diligence then should we attend to it, that we may embrace and retain it, and not let it slip out of our Thoughts and Hearts without any practical and saving Improvement of it! If it were just in God to punish the Despisers of *Moses's* Law, and they suffer'd accordingly, How much heavier Vengeance will he certainly take on the Neglecters of his Son's Gospel? But how astonishingly condescending is divine Grace to Mankind! Christ, passing by the Angels, assumed our inferior Nature, as derived from *Abraham*, into personal Union with himself: And we may well cry out with Admiration and Joy, O what is Man that thou shouldst visit him in this kind Manner by the Son of Man! How low was our Lord brought for a little while! He was made lower than the Angels in his State of Humiliation, when, as the Fruit of mere Grace to the Children whom God hath given him, he tasted the bitterest Cup of Death for their Redemption. And how eminently is he now exalted in his mediatorial Character, in Consequence of his Sufferings, and as the righteous Reward of them! The New Testament-Church and all its Affairs, yea, all God's Works of Nature and Providence are already put under his Dominion; and tho' all his Enemies are not yet actually subdued, they must at length fall before him. How highly is God glorified in his appointed Way of Salvation through a crucified and exalted Redeemer! This is a Way becoming himself, who is the first Cause and last End of all Things: All the Perfections of his Nature, together with his Law and Government, shine forth with harmonious and illustrious Honour in bringing a vast Multitude of his Sons to Glory, through the Captain of their Salvation, who was perfected for the Remainder of his Office by Sufferings, and was one with them in such an Intimacy of Nature and Relation, as is a proper Foundation of his Undertakings and Performances on their Behalf, and of his owning and regarding them as his Brethren. He died, that he might reconcile them to God, and sanctify them for Access to him and holy Communion with him; that he might destroy the Power of the Devil, who brought Sin and Death into the World, and triumph'd in the Regions of Mortality; and that he might take away the Sting of Death, and deliver his Brethren from its penal Consequences, who all their Lives long before had been brought into Bondage by its Terrors. And O what a merciful and faithful High Priest is Christ! How effectually has he procured his Peoples Reconciliation to God by his Blood! And how compassionately does he sympathize with them under all their temporal and spiritual Trials, in Remembrance of the Bitterness of his own suffering the like for them, that he might seasonably help and relieve them in their most afflictive Circumstances, till he carries them safe through all to eternal Glory!

CHAP. III.

The Apostle shews the superior Worth and Dignity of Christ, in his Person and prophetic Office, particularly above Moses, 1—6. *And represents to the* Hebrews, *from the Example of their unbelieving Ancestors, the Sin and Danger of Infidelity and Apostacy, and the Necessity of Faith in Christ, and of a stedfast Adherence to him, in order to their entering into the heavenly Rest,* 7—19.

TEXT.

1 *WHerefore, holy Brethren, Partakers of the heavenly Calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our Profession, Christ Jesus;*

PARAPHRASE.

1. SINCE the great Author of the Gospel is so far more excellent than all the former Prophets, and even than the Angels themselves, as has been observed; (*Chap.* i. ii.) Therefore, my dear Brethren, who are so, not only by Nation as *Jews*, but, in the Judgment of Charity, by Grace as Christians, and are Brethren to our Lord himself and to one another; and who by your Profession and Obligations are an holy People separated to him, and devoted to his Service, as being sanctified by his Blood and Spirit; (*Chap.* ii. 11) who also are admitted to a Partnership with the whole Body of true Believers in all the Privileges and Blessings of the Gospel, to which ye are called by special Grace, and which are of an heavenly Nature, and relate to the heavenly State, as tending to it, and certainly issuing in it, according to your *high Calling of God in Christ Jesus*; (Phil. iii. 14.) Let me beseech you to go along with me in farther attentively considering, and seriously reflecting upon, the super-eminent Dignity of the glorious Son of God, of whose Person and Office I have been speaking, who is emphatically *The sent of God*, as the Father's divine Messenger, *by whom he has spoken to us in these last Days*; (Chap i. 2) who is also our great High Priest to *purge our Sins, and make Reconciliation for them*, as has been declared, (*Chap.* i. 3, and ii. 17) and as we profess to believe and own concerning him; and so is the Author, Life and Glory of our heavenly Calling, and of our holy Profession of his Name, and of all our Regards and Hopes toward God through him, even our Lord Jesus Christ, the only true and anointed Saviour;

2 *Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also* Moses was faithful *in all his House.*

2. Who executed his *prophetic* Office * with all Fidelity to God his Father, as he, according to eternal Councils, and antient Prophecies, ordained and called him to it, constituted him in it, and sent him to fulfil it: He made known his Father's Name, and the Whole of his Mind and Will.

* Here the Apostle, comparing Christ with *Moses*, attends most immediately, as I think, to his *prophetic* Office, as *the Apostle* of our Profession; (*ver.* 1) and afterwards proceeds to discourse particularly, and at large, on his *Priesthood*, Chap. iv. 14, and in several following Chapters.

relating to the Faith, Worship, Obedience and Salvation of the Church in every Particular, and exactly according to his Appointment; as it also must be own'd, to the Honour of *Moses*, the most famous of all the antient Prophets, (*Numb.* xii. 7) that he, who was therein a Type of Christ, faithfully discharged the Office committed to him, in communicating the Laws and Ordinances, which belonged to that Dispensation, *according to all that God commanded him*, (Ex. xl. 16) relating to the Church of *Israel*, which then was God's Houshold or Family, (*Numb.* xii. 7) as his Church is, and may well be called; (1 *Tim.* iii. 15) because he has prepared and set it apart for himself, has a peculiar Property in it, presides over it, and dwells with a special and gracious Presence of Light and Influence in it.

3 *For this* Man *was counted worthy of more Glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the House, hath more Honour than the House.*

3. Consider, I say, what a superlatively excellent one Christ is: For this glorious Person, (ουτος) who is truly, but not merely Man, was infinitely more honourable in himself, and is to be esteemed as every way worthy of much greater Glory than *Moses*, in his Relation to the Church: Notwithstanding all the Honour, which that eminent Man of God justly obtained for his Fidelity in his high Employment, as a Minister of the Law, Christ really is as much more excellent in his Person and Office, and as much to be preferred to him, as the Lord and Master of his House or Family, who is the Former and Owner of it, and has prepared, erected and governs it, is, in all Reason, to be counted worthy of higher Honour and Glory, than the Family itself, or any Member of it, (and *Moses* was no more) which derives from him, owes its Being and all its Advantages to him, and is his peculiar Property for his own Pleasure, Use and Service.

4 *For every House is builded by some Man; but he that built all Things is God.*

4. For as in the literal, so in the civil, political and religious Sense of the Word, every House is prepared, erected and fitted up (υπο τινος) by some principal Founder and Proprietor of it: But he that is the great Builder of the Church, as his own House,† that has provided all its Materials, and ordered all its Affairs for his own Glory, both under the *Jewish* and Gospel-Dispensation, is, and cannot but be, God himself; 'tis his Prerogative, and none but he could be their Author; and so Christ, who is the great

† *He that built* (ο κατασκευασας) signifies *he that prepared, furnished and set in order*, as well as *he that built*; and is never used to express God's Work of *creating*; nor would it at all suit the Apostle's Argument to understand it, as speaking of the *Creation of all Things* universally. But this Word is often used to signify God's preparing such Things, as relate to the Church and his Worship. Thus in *Mat* xi. 10, *Mark* i. 2, *Luke* i. 17, and vii. 27, it is used for *preparing* or *making ready* the Way of the Lord; and *Heb.* ix. 2, 6, for *making the Tabernacle*, and ordering Things relating to it, and it is used for *Noah's preparing an Ark*, Heb. xi. 7, and 1 *Pet.* iii. 20, which are all the Places besides where it occurs, as far as I find, in the New Testament: And therefore when the Apostle says, *He that built all Things is God*, it is most natural to consider it with Reference only to all those Things, that were the Subject of the foregoing Discourse, relating to the *Church* under the Figure of a House. (See Dr. *Owen* on the Place.)

Master Builder of the Church, bears the super-eminent Dignity of *God* in his Relation to it.

5 *And Moses verily was faithful in all his House as a Servant, for a Testimony of those Things which were to be spoken after*;

5. And to carry on this Similitude, and apply it to the Case in Hand, 'Tis indeed true, as has been observed, (*v.* 2) that *Moses* acted a very faithful and upright Part in delivering the divine Laws and Ordinances about every Thing, that related to the Church of God under the Old Testament-Dispensation: Only it must be remember'd, that what he did therein, was not as *the Lord and Proprietor*, but merely in the Quality of a *ministring Servant* in God's House; he being so, and nothing more, to give a presigurative Representation to the *Israelites* of those great and excellent Things of the Gospel, which were afterwards to be more clearly revealed at large under the New Testament, and were witnessed to by his Law; (*Rom.* iii. 21) even such Things as have been, and are to be still more particularly explained in this Epistle.

6 *But Christ, as a Son over his own House: Whose House are we, if we hold fast the Confidence, and the Rejoicing of the Hope firm unto the End.*

6. But Christ is so infinitely superior to *Moses*, that, tho' he graciously condescended to take upon him the Form of a Servant in his human Nature and Office-Capacity; yet in what he has done relating to his House or Family, he acted, not merely the Part of a Servant, but also of the Lord and Master, like the Son and Heir of his own House, which is peculiarly *his*, as well as the *Father's*, as he has purchased the Church with his own Blood; has gathered it together, and formed all its Members; has reduced it to its proper Order, and settled all its Ordinances and Privileges by his own Authority; and as he influences and governs it by his Word and Spirit: The House or Family of Christ, which I mean, and am speaking of as erected under the Gospel-State, is no other than that, of which we ourselves visibly, and really are, and shall prove to be living Members, vitally united to him; in case we be not prevailed upon by the Persecutions, Temptations and Dangers, that surround us, to apostatize from Christ to *Moses*; but carefully and strenuously retain, and persevere in a bold and open Profession of his Name, on whom our Hope is built; and, notwithstanding all the Tribulations that befal us, continue, on a Principle of Faith, to maintain our Rejoicing in Hope of the Glory of God, with Stedfastness to the End of our Lives. (*Chap.* x. 23.)

7 *Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day if ye will hear his Voice,*

7. To apply all this therefore for the Caution of *nominal Professors* against Apostacy, and for the Quickning of *real Believers* to hold on, and hold out to the End, in their holy Profession of Christ and his Gospel; Let me remind you of what the Holy Ghost in the inspired Writings of *David* (Ps. xcv. 7, &c.) says to the *Jews* of his Day, who are set forth as Examples to us, (1 *Cor.* x. 6, 11) 'Tis to this effect; *Now*, immediately and without Delay, while the present Day of God's Mercy and Patience lasts, and the Messengers of his Grace are sent to you, If ye would attend

tend to, regard and embrace what he says by them, for your own spiritual and eternal Advantage;

8 Harden not your Hearts, as in the Provocation, in the Day of Temptation in the Wilderness:

8. Take heed that ye do not wilfully shut your Eyes against his Light, or stop your Ears against his Voice, and resist his Spirit; and so harden your Hearts against his Fear, and against all the Methods of his Wisdom and Love for your present and future Happiness, as the former Generation of my professing People did, by their provoking Unbelief, Strifes and Murmurings against the Lord and his Servant *Moses*, as particularly at *Massah* and *Meribah*, (Ex. xvii. 2—7) in the Day of their tempting me, by distrusting my Power and Goodness, after all my wonderful Appearances for them; and in the Day of my trying them by various Dealings with them, while they were sojourning in the Desart of *Arabia*;

9 When your Fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my Works forty Years.

9. When on that, and several other Occasions, your Ancestors, according to the Flesh, and in visible Covenant-Relation to me, called in Question my providential and gracious Presence with them, and Care of them, saying in the Language of Unbelief, *Is the Lord amongst us, or not?* (Ex. xvii. 7.) And when, at another Time, they demanded Appearances of my Favour on their Behalf, beyond what they distrustfully imagined I either would, or could give them; saying, (*Ps.* lxxviii. 19, 20) *Can God furnish a Table in the Wilderness? Can he provide Flesh for his People?* They often put my Faithfulness, Power and Kindness to the Trial, with an unworthy suspicious Temper of Mind, as though I would not be mindful of my Promise, or were not able to perform it for their Relief; no, nor to revenge the Quarrel of my Covenant upon refractory Transgressors of it, tho' they had all along experimental Proofs with the highest Evidence to the contrary: And they went on in this Manner to provoke me Times and Ways without Number, even while they saw my marvellous Works, both of Judgment and Mercy, forty Years together, from the Time of my bringing them with an out-stretched Arm from *Egypt*, till the End of their Journeyings through that barren Wilderness, where they lived under my immediate Protection and Supplies, in their Way to the Land of *Canaan*.

10 Wherefore I was grieved with that Generation, and said, They do alway err in their Heart; and they have not known my Ways.

10. Therefore, to speak after the Manner of Men, who are troubled at disagreeable Events, and particularly at Things that reflect a Dishonour upon themselves, and carry the Marks of the basest Ingratitude, I was all that while sorely displeased, offended, and at length wearied out, with the repeated and aggravated Incredulity and Misbehaviour of the People of that Age, even to the despising of my most merciful Care and Kindness, and reflecting on the Honour of my Name; and thereupon I said, in just Resentment against them, They continually, on all Occasions, go on in the perverse Counsels and Dispositions of their own Hearts, running astray from me; and they have not attended

attended to, and entertained due Apprehensions of the Ways of my Providence, whether of Judgment or Mercy toward them, which they have seen in the Course of my Dispensations; (*ver.* 9) nor did they approve of, and practically observe the Ways of my Precepts, even the Ways of Truth, Holiness and Peace, which I set before them, and enjoined upon them, that they might walk therein.

11 *So I sware in my Wrath, They shall not enter into my Rest.*

11. Upon the Whole, my Patience was so worn out by their Incredulity and Disobedience, that, in my righteous Indignation, I sware by myself, (*Numb.* xiv. 28—30) and so declared with all the Solemnity of an Oath, which shews my Word to be irreversible, that, for their high and numberless Provocations obstinately persisted in, as surely as I live, the Carcasses of that evil Generation shall fall in the Wilderness; and none of them from twenty Years old and upwards, except *Caleb* and *Joshua*, Men of a better Spirit, shall enter into the Land of *Canaan*, which I had promised to *Abraham* and his Seed, as a Land of Quietness, Peace and Plenty: a Land, in which the Ark of the Covenant should be fixed, as my Resting Place among them, (*Ps.* cxxxii. 5, 8) and which was to be a Type of my dwelling in my Church, to give them a spiritual Rest on Earth, and afterwards in Heaven, where they shall rest from all their Labours, Sins and Sorrows, and enjoy the most complete and everlasting Happiness in my immediate Presence.

12 *Take heed, Brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil Heart of Unbelief, in departing from the living God.*

12. Being therefore warned by these awful Examples,* which are left for our Admonition; and being excited by a Consideration of the Dignity of Christ's Person and Office, and of the near Concern we have with him, and the rich Advantages we may hope for from him, (*ver.* 6) Carefully see to it, (βλέπετε) look about you, look upwards and inwards, my dear Brethren in the Profession, and, as I trust, in the saving Benefits of the Gospel: Be watchful with holy Jealousy over yourselves, and with humble Dependence on divine Grace, lest at any Time, (μή ποτε) through the Corruption of your own Hearts, and the Temptations of Satan and of this present World, Unbelief, especially as proceeding from an habitually sinful Temper of Soul, wickedly prevail in any of you, which is in itself a most provoking Evil, as it is a Distrust of God, and gives him the Lye, and so reflects the highest Dishonour upon his Authority, Veracity, Power and Grace, and is the Root and Beginning of, works and leads to, and, unless subdued, will certainly

* Here the Apostle pursues his Exhortation, which he was entering upon, *ver.* 7; and, to prepare the Way for the better Enforcement of it, mentioned the Case of the disobedient *Israelites* in the intermediate Verses, which are to be consider'd as a Parenthesis; and so this Verse stands in Connection with the *wherefore* in *ver.* 7; but is now brought in with the greater Advantage in his arguing from God's Dispensations toward that unbelieving People, to his Proceedings with the Professors of Christ under the Gospel-State.

issue

issue (as it did in your rebellious Ancestors) in all Backslidings, and Apostacies from the only living and true God, who, inclusive of the Son, (*ver.* 4, 6) as one God with the Father, has necessarily and essentially Life in himself, and is the Author of spiritual and eternal Life to Believers; and lives for ever to fulfil his Promises to them, and his Threatnings to those, that wilfully depart from him.

13 But exhort one another daily while it is called, To-day; lest any of you be hardened through the Deceitfulness of Sin.

13. But as a Means of preventing this dreadful Evil; Be ye not only watchful over your own Hearts, to guard against the first Workings of Unbelief and Apostacy in yourselves; but shew a mutual tender Concern for one another, by continually exciting and encouraging each other, (καθ' εκαστην ημεραν) Day by Day and every Day, as Opportunities and Occasions offer, to Stedfastness in the Faith, and to a holy circumspect Care and Caution, in Dependence on divine Grace, against Carnality of Mind, Supineness and Negligence; and against the Temptations of Satan, the Allurements and Terrors of this World, and every thing that has a Tendency to carry you off from Christ and the Gospel: Attend to this as your present Duty, while the Day of Life is continued, and the Day of Gospel-Grace lasts, which will soon come to a Period at Death, and will do so, particularly to the *Jews*, at the approaching Destruction of *Jerusalem*; Let these Christian-Offices of brotherly Love and Faithfulness be discharged to each other out of hand; lest any one of your Number, that professes the same Faith, and is Partaker of the same external Privileges of the Gospel with yourselves, should be lulled asleep and stupified, and so led aside and seduced from Christ, through the guileful Arts of in-dwelling Sin, and the Treachery with which it works in his Heart, to magnify the Terror of Sufferings for Christ, and the Pleasure of worldly Ease, Affluence and Safety; and to put a favourable Construction and a fine Gloss upon such evil Ways of Heart and Life, as are destructive to his own Soul.

14 For we are made Partakers of Christ, if we hold the Beginning of our Confidence stedfast unto the End;

14. 'Tis of the utmost Consequence, for preserving us from this Deceitfulness of Sin and Hardness of Heart, to see to it that we are in Truth what we profess to be: For it evidently appears, that (μετοχοι γεγοναμεν) we really have been brought into a happy Partnership with Christ, † in his Righteousness, Spirit, Grace and Benefits, as Persons vitally united to him, and interested in all that he is and has, if we hold fast (την αρχην της υποστασεως καταχωμεν) our spiritual Subsistence in him, and stedfastly maintain our holy Confidence in our Profession of him, which commenced upon

† As the Apostle here speaks, not of a *future Benefit*, or of a Promise for Time to come, but of what was already *actually* enjoy'd, the Words, *if we hold fast the Beginning of our Confidence stedfast to the End*, seem to be brought in, as a *Proof and Evidence*, and not as a *Condition* of being made, or rather of *having been made* Partakers of Christ. (See Dr. *Owen* on the Place.)

our first believing; and persevere therein, against all Opposition and Danger, to the End of our Lives.

15 *While it is said, To-day if ye will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts, as in the Provocation.*

15. Take heed therefore to yourselves, and do all that in you lies to fortify every one his Brother against Temptations to Apostacy; and lay hold on the present Time for it, (εν τω λεγεσθαι) in that, or for as much as, for preventing Sloth, Negligence and Delay, 'tis said by God himself, in the Place but now quoted,* (*ver.* 7, 8) To-day, while Life and Opportunity are continued, (it being absolutely uncertain whether *a Morrow* will be afforded you, or not) If ye would believe and obey what he says unto you for your own Good, Take heed of contracting an Insensibility and Hardness of Heart, that resists all kindly Impressions, as your Fathers did when they provoked the Anger of the Lord against themselves, by their Unbelief and Rebellion in the Wilderness.

16 *For some when they had heard, did provoke: Howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.*

16. For some of them, || (to express it in the tenderest Manner possible) when they had heard the Voice of the Lord in the Promulgation of the Law at Mount *Sinai*, § and heard the Instructions he gave them by the Ministry of *Moses*, with regard to typical Ordinances of Worship, and the promised Land of *Canaan*, which was a Figure of Heaven itself; they, instead of being suitably affected and influenced by it, were guilty of the highest Provocations in the Manner before mentioned. (*ver.* 9) However, all of them, that were brought out of *Egyptian*-Bondage, did not go into those evil Ways, that were so extremely offensive to God: For *Caleb* and *Joshua* were Men of a better Spirit, and entered into the Holy Land: And so, blessed be God, 'tis only *some*, and not *all* the *Jews*, that have rejected the Gospel of Salvation in these Days, after they had heard it in the Ministrations of Christ, and of his Servants. (*Chap.* ii. 3.)

17 *But with whom was he grieved forty*

17. But Who were they of that former Generation of the *Israelites*, with whom God was so highly offended for forty

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* The Apostle here re-assumes the Consideration of the Case of the unbelieving *Israelites*, to inforce his Argument.

|| Nothing can be more like the Spirit of the Apostle *Paul*, than the almost inimitable Prudence, with which he prevents Offence to the *Jews*, and all Appearance of Harshness, in representing so awful a Case of their Fathers: He speaks of only *some*, though it were in a Manner *the whole Body* of the *Israelites*, that provoked; and throws in this further Mitigation, *howbeit not all*, though there were only *two* Exceptions, as to those that were twenty Years old and upwards, when they came out of *Egypt*. (See *Numb.* xiv. 29, 30.)

§ Though, perhaps, here may be a most immediate Reference to God's speaking with an audible Voice by the Ministry of Angels, in the Delivery of the *Ten Commandments* at Mount *Sinai*; yet I think what he said to *Israel* by his Servant *Moses*, relating to the Institutions of the *ceremonial Law*, which was *their Gospel*, and to the Promise of *Canaan*, which was an eminent Type of Heaven itself, is to be included; because the Apostle afterwards speaks of *the Gospel's* being *preached to us, as well as to them*; (Chap. iv. 2) and the *Jews* themselves, as their Writers tell us, accounted the Land of *Canaan* to be a Figure of the heavenly Rest. (See *Ainsworth* on *Gen.* xii. 5.) And our Apostle seems plainly to consider it under this Notion, *Chap.* xi. 9, 10, 14, 15, 16.)

Years? Was it not with them that had sinned, whose Carcases fell in the Wilderness?

Years together, as to exclude them from the Land, which he had promised to *Abraham* and to his Seed? It certainly was not with all of them promiscuously without Distinction. Was it not with them who had rebelled and murmured against him in the most notorious Manner, and *that* repeatedly through Unbelief? Yes certainly it was with them, and them only, who, as a just Punishment of their Iniquities, were destroyed, and whose dead Bodies lay slain by the righteous Judgment of God, like miserable and detestable Objects, in the howling Desart, through which they were passing, before any of them reached the happy Country to which they were bound.

18 *And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his Rest, but to them that believed not?*

18. And who were they among that People, against whom God was so greatly incensed, as to swear in his just and awful Anger,, that they should not be admitted to enjoy the Privileges, Peace and Blessings of that Rest, which was to be possessed in *Canaan*, according to his Appointment? It was not against the Faithful among them; No, but only against those of them, who, notwithstanding all their Professions and Obligations, and all the wonderful Appearances of God among them, rejected him by Unbelief; as is plain from what he said, not only concerning them, but to them. (*Numb.* xiv. 28, 29.)

19 *So we see that they could not enter in because of Unbelief.*

19. Upon the Whole then, We plainly see, and should observe and consider it to humble and caution us, and to engage our constant Dependence on divine Grace for keeping us close to Christ, that they could not be admitted to set one Foot on the Holy Land, in order to their enjoying its Blessings, how desirous soever they were of it; because of their Unbelief, which was the Root and Spring of all their other Provocations, and forfeited all Right and Claim to the Promise of entering into that Rest, and so excluded them from it.

RECOLLECTIONS.

With what incomparable Dignity does our Lord Jesus Christ transcend *Moses*, in his Person and Office! *Moses* was merely a Man, and a Servant; and the best that can be said of him is, that he was a Part of God's House, and faithful in his Ministry: But Christ is more than a mere Man or Servant; he is the God that formed his Church, and orders all its Affairs; and is the Lord, Proprietor and Ruler of it; and in all his Administrations is faithful to his Father that appointed him to his Office, as a divine Mediator and Saviour. How worthy is he of our highest Regard! All, that profess to be Partakers of the heavenly Calling, should think frequently and honourably of him, as the great Apostle and High Priest of their Profession, and hold fast the Beginning of their Confidence, and their rejoicing therein, to the End, as ever they would prove themselves to be true Members of his Family, in which he dwells, and will be glorified here and for ever hereafter. How watchful should we be against the first Workings of Unbelief, and much more against the Prevalence of it! This is a Mother-Sin, that leads the Way to all others: It proceeds from the Corruption of the Heart, and is in itself exceeding sinful: It is no less than a Departure from the living God and Saviour, in whom is all our Help, Hope and Happiness. And, ah, how dreadful are the Effects of Apostacy! 'Tis the highest Provocation to God, and Hardning of the Heart against him.

 'Tis

'Tis a shamefully distrustful Tempting him; a Grief to his good Spirit; and a contemptuous Inobservance of all his Dispensations of Mercy and Judgment; and brings the heaviest Vengeance upon Apostates themselves. How should the Examples of others Unbelief and Rebellion against God, and of their Punishment, be a solemn Warning to us, that we may not tread in their Steps; but may be excited to an obediential Faith without Delay, while the Door of Mercy is open in the Gospel! 'Tis our greatest Interest and Duty to attend, and yield ourselves up, to what the Holy-Ghost says in his Word, and in secret Suggestions to our Souls; and not harden our Hearts against it, lest God should, e'er we are aware, swear in his Wrath, that we shall never enter into the Rest, which he has provided for his People. But how great is the Deceitfulness of Sin to stupify the Conscience! And what Need have Believers themselves to be daily cautioned, and to caution one another against it! No outward Privileges or Professions of Religion will secure us from divine Wrath, if our Hearts are not right with God: But, blessed be his Name, there are some of a more excellent Spirit, like *Caleb* and *Joshua*, that shall enter into eternal Rest. They are already Partakers of Christ, and of the Benefits of his Purchase, and shall for ever enjoy him in the glorious State of heavenly Rest. But a Perseverance in Faith, and in a holy Profession of it, is the best Proof and Evidence of its Sincerity, and that this is our happy Case. In vain do others pretend to it; but they that abide in Christ, as all true Believers do, are kept by the Power of God, through Faith, to complete Salvation.

CHAP. IV.

The Apostle inculcates an humble cautious Fear upon the Hebrews, *lest any of them should come short of the promised Rest through Unbelief,* 1, 2. *Shows the much greater Excellence of the heavenly Rest, which is proposed in the Gospel, than that of the earthly* Canaan, *which was set before the* Israelites *under the Law,* 3—10. *And concludes with the most awakening and encouraging Arguments and Motives to Faith and Hope in our Approaches to God,* 11—16.

TEXT.

1 LET *us therefore fear lest, a Promise being left* us *of entering into his Rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. SINCE God dealt so severely, in his righteous Judgment, with his antient People for their Disobedience and Unbelief, as has been observed; (*Chap.* iii. 7—19) and since his Dispensations toward them were designed as an Admonition to us, we may justly expect to be dealt with in like Manner, if we be guilty of the like Sins, especially considering the richer Advantages we now enjoy, above what they had then: It therefore should be Matter of deep Concern with us, to maintain an awful Reverence of the Greatness, Holiness and Justice of God, and a religious Dread of provoking him, not with a distrustful, dismaying and disheartning, but with a watchful and cautious Fear to put us upon a diligent Use of all Means, in an humble Dependence on his Grace, for our own and each others Preservation from Apostacy, and from the terrible Consequences of it, that as God under the Gospel-State has left on Record, and proposed for our Encouragement, a gracious Promise of Admittance to a State of Peace and holy Communion with him, through Christ, in truely evangelical Worship

 and

and Obedience in this World, and of a glorious Rest and Peace in the World to come; and as this, of all others, may be emphatically stiled *God's Rest*, not only as he is the Author of it, but chiefly as he complacentially rests in Christ the Purchaser of it, and is well pleased with his People in him, and with the Accomplishment of all the Designs of his Grace through him, and as it is the last and most perfect Rest, that he will ever give them, and he himself is the Sum of its Felicity and Glory; so the utmost Care and Caution ought to be used, lest any of you, through Sloth and Unbelief, in some Season of Temptation, should reject and forsake the Promise, and so neglect the great Salvation of the Gospel, (*Chap.* ii. 3) and fall short of an Enjoyment of it; or should even so much as appear, to yourselves or others, to flag in your Christian-Course, and to be so distanced in it, as not to reach its special Blessings here, and the glorious Inheritance of eternal Life hereafter, as the *Israelites* fell short of the promised Land, through their Infidelity and Disobedience.

2 *For unto us was the Gospel preached, as well as unto them: But the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with Faith in them that heard* it.

2. For the Gospel of Salvation by Jesus Christ has now been preached to us, who sit under the Ministration of it, as it formerly was, for Substance, though more obscurely, to our Ancestors: But (ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς) the good Word, which was communicated to them in the Ordinance of hearing, as God's appointed Means of begetting Faith, did not become effectual, and turn to any real Advantage, as to many of those that heard it in the Ministry of *Moses* and other inspired Writers, that testified of Christ; (*John* v. 39, 46) because they did not receive, appropriate and apply it by Faith to themselves; and so it was not united, and as it were incorporated with their Hearts, as Food is with the Body, when it is eaten, and turned into suitable Nourishment by a proper Digestion of it: No more will the Gospel of the Grace of God, which is now more plainly preached to, and heard by us in the Ministry of Christ's Servants, be really and eventually profitable to us; unless we receive and digest it by Faith, as our spiritual Food, and it become *an ingrafted Word, which is able to save our Souls.* (James i. 21.)

3 *For we which have believed, do enter*

3. For as entering into any Rest, which God has proposed to his People, is only in a Way of believing*; so those

* The great Design of the Apostle in this and the following Verses, down to the 10th, is to prove that there is a Promise of Rest peculiar to the Gospel-State, and to obviate an Objection, as though what he had alledged and insisted on, *Chap.* iii. 7—19, from *Ps.* xcv. 11, to enforce his Exhortation to the *Hebrews*, lest they should fall short of it, did not affect them; because God's Rest spoken of there, or in any other Part of the Old Testament, related only to the Rest of the Land of *Canaan*, and the Rest of the seventh-day *Sabbath*, (ver. 4) which were now no longer Matter of *Promise*, they having been already actually *enjoy'd*. The Apostle therefore shews in these Verses that it may be collected, even from what is said in that *Psalm* itself, that there is, in reality, a Promise of another Rest of God, beside those; and so supports and strengthens his Argument for taking heed, lest they should fall

into Rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my Wrath, If they shall enter into my Rest: Although the Works were finished from the Foundation of the World.

those of us, who, by a true and lively Faith, have received and trusted in Christ, and in the Promise of eternal Life, as proposed to us in the Gospel, do thereby already enter into a State of spiritual Rest and Peace, in Communion with God through him, according to the Light and Grace of the New Testament-Dispensation; and we, even now, enter by Faith and Hope in Gospel-Worship, into the heavenly Rest within the Vail, as a Pledge and Assurance to us of our personally entering hereafter into the full Possession of it, *whither Jesus the Fore-runner is entered for us:* (Chap. vi. 20.) And that such an excellent State of Rest was designed of God for New Testament-Believers, far exceeding that of the Land of *Canaan*; as also that none but true Believers shall enter into it, is evident, if we compare the several Passages, where the Scripture speaks of *God's Rest*, which he has gradually introduced in different Ages of the World; as for Instance, He said of the unbelieving refractory *Jews* in the Wilderness, (*Ps.* xcv. 11) I, in my just and hot Displeasure, have pronounced irreversibly, with all the Solemnity of an Oath, that, as surely as I live, I myself will cease to be God, if any of them shall have Admission into my Rest. This, by just Construction, according to the Rule of Contraries, plainly implies a Promise, that sincere and faithful Believers among them should enter into it; (*ver.* 6) and supposes that the Rest proposed to them was yet to be expected, although there was a former Rest of God, which was then subsisting, and commenced immediately upon his having, at the Beginning of the World, perfected the Work of Creation in six Days; and so there was a Rest of God near three thousand Years before that of the Land of *Canaan*.

4 *For he spake in a certain Place of the seventh* Day *on this wise, And God did rest the seventh Day from all his Works.*

4. For, with respect to that former Sort of Rest, he had spoke of the seventh Day of the Week, in a certain well-known Passage of the Old Testament, after this Manner, as 'tis recorded, (*Gen.* ii. 2, 3) the Whole of which (as ye who are so conversant with the Scriptures may easily recollect) stands thus, *On the seventh Day God ended his Work, which he had made: And he rested on the seventh Day from all his Work which he had made, and God blessed the seventh Day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his Work, which God created and made*, that is, not as

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fall short of this most excellent Rest. 'Tis, I own, no easy Matter to set the several Steps of his reasoning on this Head in a clear and obvious Light: But it will be a great Help to our Understanding it, if we consider that he speaks of *three Sorts* of God's Rest; *one*, which commenced upon the finishing of the Work of *Creation*, ver. 3, 4; *another*, which was afterward proposed to *Israel* in the Wilderness, as to be enjoy'd in the Land of *Canaan*, ver. 5; and a *third*, which, after both those Rests, was to be enjoy'd in the Gospel-State and heavenly World, *ver.* 6—11: And by comparing what the Scripture says of all these Rests, it appears that there is still a better Rest that remains for true Believers, than either of the two first before mentioned; and *that* is an eternal Rest in Heaven, inclusive of the spiritual and holy Rest which they have in Christ by Faith here, as the Beginning and Earnest, and as issuing in the Possession, of Glory hereafter.

though

though he were weary, and needed Rest for Refreshment after Labour, as Men do: But as Rest supposes, and refers to some preceding Work; so God, having compleated his Work of Creation, ceased from doing any Thing further of that Kind, and express'd his great Pleasure and Satisfaction in what he had done; with regard to which 'tis said, that *on the Seventh Day he rested, and was refreshed:* (Ex. xxxi. 17.) And, in Token of this, he appointed that Day to be observed and enjoyed by Man after Six Days Labour, as a Sabbath of spiritual and holy, as well as of bodily Rest, when *he blessed the Sabbath Day, and hallowed it.* (Ex. xx. 11.) *That* therefore could not be the Rest intended, when God swore that the obstinate and rebellious *Israelites* should not enter into it.

5 *And in this* Place *again, If they shall enter into my Rest.*

5. And again, in the same Place, (*Ps.* xcv. 11.) he speaks of another Rest besides and after this, saying, Let me not live, if they enter into my Rest; which, as it refers to the *Jews* in the Wilderness, to whom it was first spoken, is indeed to be understood of their entering into the Land of *Canaan* at the End of their toilsome Journeyings through that vast Desart, in Resemblance of God's having ceased from those extraordinary and wonderful Operations of Providence, whereby he supported and defended them, and drove out the former Inhabitants of that Country, and made Way for his People to go into it and take Possession of it: But as it refers to the People in *David*'s own Day, to whom these Words were spoken and applied, as recited in the *Psalms*, after they had been in actual Possession of the Land of *Canaan* about four hundred and fifty Years; (*Acts* xiii. 20.) it must have a farther Meaning, than barely that Rest, which they then enjoy'd there.

6 *Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached, entered not in because of Unbelief;*

6. Since therefore, as is strongly imply'd in the Threatning against them that believed not, (ἀπολείπεται) there is still left a Promise of Rest in the Word of God, (*v.* 1) which true Believers should certainly be Partakers of, according to his Design and Appointment, as, in fact, the next Generation of *Israelites* in the Wilderness were of the promised Land; and since (οἱ πρότερον εὐαγγελισθέντες) the Generality of those *Jews*, to whom the good Tidings of entering into that typical Rest, was first published in the Wilderness, fell short of it by Means, and on Account of their provoking Unbelief, though others were afterwards brought to possess it.

7 *Again, he limiteth a certain Day, saying*

7. For this Reason, * I say, God, after all this, again (ὁρίζει) prescribes and fixes by *David*, in the forementioned

* I take this Verse to be brought in, as an Argument to prove what had been said, *ver.* 6, about a Promise being left of a Rest yet to come, *ver.* 1, rather than as another Argument, distinct from that, to prove the same Point; and so the *therefore*, ver. 6, refers to the Case of God's saying what is alledg'd in this Verse, the first Words of which I think may be better read, *he again limiteth*, than *Again he limiteth*, as tho' one Argument was contained in *ver.* 6, and another was added in this, to prove the same Thing; whereas, if it were so, they would probably have been connected by the Copula *and* again, as is usual in such Cases, and as we had it in *ver.* 5. (καὶ πάλιν)

Psalm,

in David, To-day, after so long a Time; as it is said, To-day if ye will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts.

Psalm, a certain Day or Season then to come, in which those of that Age were to seek an Entrance into his Rest, after they had been for so many Years actually settled in the Land of *Canaan*, according to what is there said, even then, by Way of Caution to them, If ye would hearken to the Voice of God, relating to the Time of this further promised Rest, which ye ought to do now immediately without Delay, lest ye never have an Opportunity afterwards for it, Take heed that ye do not despise, and so harden your Hearts against, his awful Admonitions and gracious Promises, with regard to this Rest, as your Fathers did in the Wilderness, with regard to their Rest in *Canaan*. This plainly shows that what is there said related, not to the Rest, which was already enjoy'd, but to one, which was to be enjoy'd after they were in full Possession of the promised Land.

8 *For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another Day.*

8. For if *Joshua*, whose Name is called by the *Greeks*, *Jesus* which signifies *a Saviour*, and who was a Type of Jesus Christ, as the great Captain of Salvation, that conducts Believers to their spiritual and eternal Rest; If, I say, *Joshua*, the Son of *Nun*, had given the *Israelites* Possession of the ultimate Rest intended in the *Psalms*, by his having brought them into, and settled them, so long before, in the Land of *Canaan*; (Josh. xxii. 4.) Then, (μετα ταυτα) after these Things had been actually accomplished so many hundred Years before, God would not still have spoke by *David* of another Day or Season, in which the People that then dwelt in Possession of the promised Land, were to seek after a further Rest, which was typify'd by that, and could be no other, than what was to be introduced by Jesus, *the Messiah* himself.

9 *There remaineth therefore a Rest to the People of God.*

9. Upon the whole then, since neither the Rest of the *Seventh Day Sabbath*, nor of the Land of *Canaan* were, or could be intended by that last mentioned Day, which was spoken of after both those former Rests were actually enjoy'd, 'tis evident that there still remains under the Gospel-State, a more complete and glorious Rest, which was typify'd by, and is vastly preferable to those Rests, and is to be inherited by the true People of God, inclusive of a *spiritual Rest* by Faith in Christ, and of the *Sabbatism* or *Day* of holy and joyful Rest, as a *New Testament-Sabbath*, in Commemoration of his Resurrection from the Dead; but principally and ultimately consisting of that *heavenly* Rest, which these are Foretastes and Pledges of, and which, in Virtue of what Christ has done and suffer'd, Believers shall be admitted to, and continue with him in the full Enjoyment of for ever.

10 *For he that is entered into his Rest,*

10. For our Lord, having gone through the great Work of Redemption in his Obedience, Sufferings and Death, *

* 'Tis pretty remarkable that, in the *Greek*, the Apostle, *ver.* 9, changes the Term, and uses another Word, (σαββατισμος) which signifies a *Sabbatism*, to express the *Rest* that remains for the People of God, different from that, (καταπαυσις) which he had all along used before, and returns to again, *ver.*

rose

he also hath ceased from his own Works, as God did *from his.*

rose again and took Possession of heavenly Glory; and so rested from all the Labours, Sufferings and Trials, which before he underwent, in finishing the Work that his Father gave him to do, and in procuring a blessed Rest for his People, a Pledge of which is given in the New Testament-Sabbath: And every true Believer that has enter'd by Faith into the spiritual Rest of the Gospel-State, and of a holy Sabbatism here upon Earth, has done with all the Works of Iniquity; so as to be no longer a Lover, Practiser or willing Servant of Sin, as formerly he was; and he has ceased from trusting or resting, as he used to do, in any of his own Works of Righteousness, though not ceased from *the Practice* of them; who having finished his Course of Obedience, Trial and Conflict in this Life, and entered into a complete and glorious Rest in the celestial State, he has not only ceased, and that intirely, from all the Sins, but likewise from all the Toils, Persecutions and Sorrows of every Kind, that attended him in this evil World: (*Rev.* xiv. 13.) And both Christ himself, and every true Believer in him, according to their respective Conditions, have in this Manner rested from their Labours, in Resemblance of what God did at the Beginning of the World; who, when he had finished the Work of Creation, ceased from working after that Sort any more.

11 *Let us labour therefore to enter into that Rest, lest any Man fall after the same Example of Unbelief.*

11. As therefore the sweetest Rest comes after Labour, and is greatly recommended and enhanced by it; and as ye have heard what an excellent Rest, superior to all others, is proposed to Believers in the Promises of the Gospel; Let it, † answerable to the Exhortation given, (*ver.* 1.) be our diligent Care and Study, and our earnest Endeavour in the Use of all appointed Means, and in humble Dependence on divine Grace, to overcome all Difficulties, and break thro' all Oppositions and Discouragements, from within and from without, that we may have Access into all the Privileges and Blessings of the Gospel-State here, which will be

10, to express the Rest of God and his People. The Reason of this Alteration, says the learned Dr. *Owen*, and several other noted Divines, is to include the Day of *Sabbatical Rest*, which God has appointed under the *Gospel-State*, correspondent to what had been said, *ver.* 4, about the *Seventh Day Sabbath*; insomuch that as that Day of Sabbatical Rest was appointed immediately upon, and in Commemoration of God's resting from the Work of Creation; so the New Testament Day of Sabbatical Rest, or the first Day of the Week, was appointed immediately upon, and in Commemoration of Christ's resting from the Work of Redemption, when he rose from the Dead, and enter'd into his *Rest*, as having *ceased from his own former Work, as God did from his.* The Reader may see these Interpretations argued for at large in Dr. *Owen* on these Verses, and in his Exercitations on the Sabbath; and argued against by Mr. *Peirce* on this Place. However, as, after all, there seem to be considerable Difficulties attending each of these Interpretations, and I can't be positive whether a *Christian-Sabbath* be intended; or whether he *that has entered into his Rest* refers to *Christ*, or to *Believers*. I have thought proper to take in all these Senses, which may be done without ones excluding the other; and so leave every Reader to choose that which he judges to be best.

† The Apostle here returns to his Exhortation, *ver.* 1, to take heed, lest any of them should fall short of the promised Rest through Unbelief; and does this now with greater Advantage, in Consideration of the Proof he had given in the intermediate Verses of the *certain and superior Excellence* of that Rest, which belongs to the Gospel, above what was enjoyed in the Land of *Canaan*.

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an unspeakable Refreshment to our own Souls, and give them the most composed and delightful Rest in Christ, suitable to our Circumstances here; and that we may have a safe and triumphant Arrival to the heavenly Glory hereafter, where we shall rest from all our Labours, Sins and Sorrows, and enter into Peace, and into the Joy of our Lord, and be possessed of all possible Blessedness with him for ever; Let us, I say, be deeply concerned at Heart about this Rest, each one for himself, and stir up one another to look out after it; lest as the carnal *Israelites*, notwithstanding their visible Relation to God, and their having a Promise of *Canaan* set before them, were so disheartened by real or imagined Terrors, Wants and Dangers, through the powerful Workings of Unbelief, as not to arrive at that promised Rest; so any amongst us that hear the Gospel, and are Professors of Faith in Christ, should, through Slothfulness, Fear and Unbelief, never attain to that spiritual Rest, which is begun in Grace here to be perfected in Glory hereafter; but should fail of entering into it, in like Manner, and for the same Cause, as they fell short of the earthly *Canaan*. Let their Sin and Punishment be an Instruction and a cautionary Example to us; lest we, being left to ourselves, plunge into *both*, as they did.

12 *For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joints and Marrow; and is a Discerner of the*

12. There is the greatest Reason to maintain a godly Jealousy over ourselves and over one another, lest this should be the awful Case of any of us, that make a Profession of Christ's Name; and there is good Encouragement for an Exercise of the utmost Care and Caution herein: For our Lord Jesus Christ, who (as ye well know) bears the Character of *the Word of God*, is *the living One*, (ὁ ζῶν) and *the Prince of Life*, (Rev. i. 18, and Acts iii. 15.) who has Life in himself, and is the Author of it to others; (*John* v. 25—29,) * and the written Word, even *the Holy Scripture*,

* By *the Word of God* some here understand *Christ*, *the personal* Word of God, who was usually stiled *the Word*, and the *Word of God* in the Writings of the *Jews*, to whom this Epistle was sent, and is often so called in the New Testament, as particularly in *John* i. 1, 14, and *Rev.* xix. 13; and he may probably be meant by *the Word of God's Grace* in *Acts* xx. 32. (See the Note there.) But others understand *the Word of God* here to signify *the Holy Scripture*, which is frequently mentioned under that Title, as in *Luke* v. 1, and xi. 28, and *Acts* viii. 14. and xi. 1, and xiii. 7, 44, 46. *All the Properties* ascribed to *the Word of God*, in this and the next Verse, evidently belong to our *Lord Jesus Christ*; and *some* of them seem to be so *personal*, as most fitly to be apply'd to him, who I think is fairly to be understood as described *ver.* 13, where it is said, in Connection with this Verse, *neither is there any Creature, that is not manifest in his Sight; but all Things are naked and opened to the Eyes of him, with whom we have to do*: And yet the Properties of the Word of God, in the Verse before us, may in some Sense be applied to the *written Word*, as attended with his Energy in the reading, preaching and hearing of it; and the Connection with the preceding Context seems to give Countenance to this Application of these Passages: For Christ may be here considered as the Author of, and as working by the Word, to inforce the Exhortation to take heed of rejecting it by Unbelief. However, 'tis difficult to determine with Certainty, which of these is most precisely intended; the Arguments for one and the other may be seen in various learned and critical Commentators, such as Dr. *Owen*, who takes it to be meant of *Christ*; and Dr. *Whitby* and Mr. *Peirce*, who understand it of the *written Word*. But as all that is here ascribed to the Word of God, relates to what Christ does by Means of the written Word, and to what the written Word can-

Thoughts and Intents of the Heart.

ture, which is the Word of Revelation, has a quickening Virtue in it, as animated by his Spirit, (*John* vi. 63.) to raise dead Souls to spiritual Life, and to make living Souls lively: And Christ the eternal Word, exerts a divine Energy by Means of the written Word, as he makes it mightily impressive on the Mind and Conscience to convince of Sin, and subdue its Power, and captivate every high Thought to the Obedience of Christ; (2 *Cor.* x. 4.) as also to strike Terror into hypocritical Souls, and to comfort the Hearts of sincere Believers: And his Agency by his Word, which is the *Sword of the Spirit,* and like a sharp *two-edged Sword that proceeds out of his Mouth,* (Ephes. vi. 17, and Rev. i. 16.) is more cutting and penetrating into the inmost Recesses of the Heart, than the sharpest Sword can be, when thrust into the Body; its mighty Strength, in the Hand of Christ, makes its Way to the inmost Parts of a Man, reaching unto (διικνούμενος) the animal or sensitive, and the intellectual Soul; (See the Note on 1 *Thess.* v. 23.) and even dividing between them, so as either to reduce them to a holy Order in sanctifying *both,* and keeping them in their distinct and proper Places, with a due Subordination of the Affections and Passions to the Understanding in true Believers; or to procure Death and Ruin in executing Judgments upon false Professors, by the Power of Christ according to his Word: And the eternal Son of God, by his Word, and his Spirit accompanying it, instantly pierces, in a Way of Mercy, or of Judgment, the most hidden Parts, as the Joints and Marrow of the human Body, that lie out of View, are reached by a sharp Sword, that strikes home, and gives the deepest Wound: The eternal Word also by his Omnipresence searches, knows and judges of the regular, or sinful Thoughts and Principles, Motives, Purposes and Ends, that work in every one's Heart, (*Rev.* ii. 23.) as well as the outward Acts of his Life; and his written Word in the Ministrations of it, as rendered powerful by him, discovers a Man's whole Soul to himself; and tells him all that is in his Heart, either to humble or comfort him, or to condemn or acquit him, according to the real State and Condition, in which he stands before God, as a Hypocrite, or true Believer.

13 *Neither is there any Creature that is not manifest in his*

13. Nor is it possible for any of us to escape Christ's most critical Notice, or to be out of the Reach of his powerful Operations, one way or other, upon our Minds and

not do, but as made efficacious for it by him, It amounts to much one and the same Thing in the Apostle's Argument, whether we here consider *Christ,* or the *Scripture* to be signify'd by the Word of God; and therefore both Senses are taken into the Paraphrase, which may be done with the utmost Consistency, while we consider one as *the efficient Cause,* and the other as *the Instrument* of the Operations, which are ascribed to it.

Sight: But all Things are naked, and opened unto the Eyes of him with whom we have to do

Conſciences by his Word *; there being no Creature of what Rank or Kind ſoever, that lies concealed from his all-comprehenſive View, *who knows all Things*, (John xxi. 17) and *who ſearches the Reins and the Heart, and will give unto every one according to his Works*: (Rev. ii. 23) None of them are in the leaſt concealed from him; but, whatever we may think of it, or whatever Attempts we may make to hide ourſelves from him, all Perſons and Things, even the moſt ſecret Thoughts and Deſires, Hopes and Fears, Tempers and Diſpoſitions of all our Hearts, lie open to his accurate Inſpection, like Things that are quite naked and expoſed to his Eyes, which, for their piercing Light and Luſtre, are as a Flame of Fire: (*Rev.* i. 14) † And as the Beaſts for Sacrifice were flay'd, and cut, and laid open, that the Prieſt might narrowly examine, and ſee whether there were any Faults or Imperfections in the Carcaſe or its Entrails, that would render it unfit to be offered; ſo all Things in, and about us are moſt evidently expoſed, and clearly manifeſted, to his critical all-ſeeing Eye, with whom we have the neareſt and moſt important Concerns, and have more to do, than with all this World; to whom alſo we muſt one Day give an exact Account of all Things done in the Body, whether they be good or bad; (2 *Cor.* v. 10) and who is the principal Subject of our Diſcourſe in this Epiſtle. Theſe are awful and affecting Thoughts, to engage our utmoſt Circumſpection and Care, leſt any of us fall ſhort of the heavenly Reſt through Unbelief.

14 *Seeing then that we have a great High Prieſt, that is paſſed*

14. But, to return to what has been ſaid about *the Prieſthood* of Chriſt, whom we have called *the High Prieſt of our Profeſſion*, (Chap. iii. 1, See the Note there) We have ſuch

* *In his Sight* undoubtedly relates not to the *written Word*; but either to *God* or *Chriſt*; for *his Sight* is a *perſonal* Character, as appears from the Expreſſion itſelf, and from what follows in immediate Connection with it; and it ſeems to me, that we are to underſtand it as meant more directly of *Chriſt*, than of *God the Father*, though not excluſive of him: For it was not *God himſelf*, but the *Word of God*, that was the Subject all along ſpoken of in the preceding Verſe, as working in ſuch a lively, powerful and piercing Manner; and here in Confirmation of it, and in cloſe and natural Connection with it, he, who is there called *the Word of God*, is repreſented, as *omniſcient* and *Judge of all*, and therefore undoubtedly capable of exerting all thoſe Operations, either in a Way of Judgment or of Mercy; and the laſt Clauſe of this Verſe ſeems to direct our Thoughts to him, as 'tis he with whom we have moſt immediately to do, for being caſt or acquitted in Judgment; ſince the Father judgeth no Man *immediately* and *perſonally*, but hath committed all Judgment to the Son: Or as the Word (λογος) here rendered *have to do*, ſignifies alſo *an Account*, as it is tranſlated in many Places, particularly *Mat.* xii. 36, and xviii. 23. *Luke* xvi. 2. *Rom.* xiv. 12. *Phil.* iv. 17. *Heb.* xiii. 17. and 1 *Pet.* iv. 5; and as at other Times it ſignifies *Speech* or *Diſcourſe*, and is ſo render'd *John* viii. 43. *Acts* xx. 7. and 1 *Cor.* ii. 1, 4. and in almoſt numberleſs other Places; ſo the Paſſages before us (προς ον ημιν ο λογος) might be tranſlated, *to whom we muſt give an Account*, as the great Judge of all; or *concerning whom we ſpeak*; (προς pro περι;) Compare the *Greek* in *Chap.* i. 7, and v. 11. All which intirely agrees to our Lord Chriſt, and points us to him.

† Several Criticks have obſerved, that the Words (γυμνα και τετραχηλισμενα) here render'd *naked and opened*, allude to the Sacrifices under the Law, whoſe Carcaſes were flay'd, and hung up naked to be ſeen without their Skin, and were afterwards laid on their Backs, cut open, and cleaved aſunder through the Neck and Back-bone; and ſo every Thing, within and without, was expoſed to open View, to be examined with the greateſt Exactneſs for diſcovering, whether there were any Blemiſh or Defect in it, or not.

into the Heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our Profession.

a superlative High Priest as, having made Atonement for Sin by his own Blood, is gone into a more glorious and eminent Place of God's special Residence, than any High Priest of old was admitted to in the Execution of his Office: He is ascended and gone through the Aerial,* far above all visible Heavens, (*Ephes.* iv. 10) even to the Heaven of Heavens, now to appear in the Presence of God for us; (*Chap.* ix. 24) and so he is the great Antitype of the Priests under the Law, who passed through the second Vail of the Tabernacle and Temple, with the Blood of Sacrifices, into the Holy of Holies. The great and glorious High Priest I mean, is no less a Person than that Jesus, who in his divine Nature is by way of Peculiarity and Eminence the Son of God: We having then such a matchless High Priest, so incomprehensibly great, divine and excellent, so throughly qualified for, and exalted in his Office, the most difficult and fundamental Part of which he has already performed on Earth, and the Remainder of which he is now executing in Heaven; Let us be hereby encouraged, in the Exercise of Faith, Love and holy Obedience, to maintain a free and open Confession of him, and professed Subjection to him, as our only Lord and Saviour, with Stedfastness, Diligence and Perseverance therein unto the End. And we may depend on seasonable Aids and Assistances from him to enable us hereunto.

15. *For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our Infirmities; but was in all Points tempted like as we are, yet without Sin.*

15. For this great High Priest is as *willing*, as he is *able* to compassionate and relieve us under all our Trials and Difficulties. Though he is gone to Heaven, he is not unmindful of us who are his Members upon Earth, nor has he laid down his Office; but we have him still officiating for us: Nor have we a High Priest that is insensible of our Wants and Weaknesses, Miseries and Dangers, as if he could not be tenderly, though not grievously, impressed with them; or could not be excited by truly human Affections, as far as is consistent with, and suitable to his present State of Exaltation, to pity and succour us in the most effectual Manner under them, and in due Time to deliver us from them: But as, while he was here in the Flesh, he himself suffered by Hunger and Thirst, Weariness and Pain, and other natural Infirmities of Mankind, and by all Manner of Temptations and Persecutions, and inward and outward Afflictions and Trials, just of the same Kind, and in the same Manner, as we ourselves now are liable to

* *Passed into the Heavens* (διεληλυθότα τοὺς οὐρανούς) properly signifies *passed through the Heavens*, and manifestly alludes to the High Priest's entering through the second Vail into the Holy of Holies, with the Blood of the Sacrifices, on the great Day of Atonement once a Year, an Account of which we have at large *Lev.* 16; and which was typical of our great High Priest's more glorious Entrance, once for all, through the visible Heavens, with the Virtue of his own Blood into the most holy Place, even into the immediate Presence of God in the Heaven of Heavens, as is evidently represented in this Epistle, and particularly *Chap.* ix. 7—12.

them; so he experimentally knows what we undergo in our Griefs and Sorrows; and, remembring his own Sufferings, sympathizes with us under ours, as we are *Members of his Body, of his Flesh, and of his Bones*: (Eph. v. 30.) And yet (which is more than can be said of any of us, or any former High Priest) he bore and went through his own Troubles without ever having misbehaved, or committed the least Sin, tho' he was tempted to it; and so he is not only the fitter to be a complete Example to us in all that we endure, and to fortify us against all sinful Thoughts, Words or Ways under, and by means of our Temptations; but is also the fitter to take away the Iniquity that we may fall into by them, since he, having gone through them in such a perfectly holy Manner, *needed not, as the High Priests under the Law, to offer up Sacrifice, first for his own Sins, and then for the People's*; but all the Virtue of his Sacrifice was intirely and alone for our Sins, which he expiated, once for all, when he offered up himself, (*Chap.* vii. 27.)

16 *Let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in Time of need.*

16. Let us therefore, in Consideration of his most excellent Priesthood, which, in Consequence of what he had done in a Way of Atonement on Earth, he is carrying on in his Intercession for us in Heaven, be encouraged to draw near to God * (*προσερχώμεθα*) by Faith in Prayer, and in every other Ordinance of Gospel-Worship, as he is seated, not on a Throne of Justice to execute deserved Vengeance upon us; but on a Throne of free and condescending Grace to commune with us, and to bless us, which was typified by the Mercy-seat under the Law, where God dwelt between the Cherubim in visible Appearances of Glory, (*Ps.* lxxx. 1) and gave forth his Orders to the Children of *Israel*. (Ex. xxv. 22.) While therefore we think of him, as a Sovereign on *a Throne*, † that we may approach him with awful Reverence and godly Fear, in Consideration of the infinite Distance there is between him and us, Let us, at the same Time, realize him as on *a Throne of Grace*, to embolden a cheerful Freedom of Access to him by Faith, with holy Liberty, and humble Confidence in him, as our reconciled God and Father, that we may receive (*ἵνα λάβωμεν*) all the Mercy, for which that Throne is prepared, and

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* *The Throne of Grace* signifies, not the Throne of *Christ*, as some would suppose; but the Throne of *God the Father*: For Christ is here all along spoken of as our great High Priest, who appears before God the Father, on our Behalf, to act for us toward him, and to encourage our coming to the Throne of Grace. Accordingly 'tis said that Christ *is entered into Heaven itself, now to appear in the Presence of God for us*; (Chap. ix. 24) and he is considered in our Context, not as *the Object* on the Throne, but as *the Medium* of our coming to the Throne, as *through him we have Access by one Spirit to the Father*, Ephes. ii. 18. (See Dr. *Owen* and Mr. *Peirce* on the Place.)

† God's exercising *Mercy and Grace* in Christ may be considered as his being seated on a *Throne*, because he therein appears with Majesty, Royalty and Glory; and on *a Throne of Grace*, because Grace erected it, and reigns there, and dispenses all Blessings from thence, in a Way of mere unmerited Favour, to the Praise of its own Glory; and 'tis a Throne of Grace founded on the *Mediation of Christ*, as he is *set forth to be a Propitiation, through Faith in his Blood*, Rom iii. 25, and appears there as a righteous Advocate for us, in the Virtue of his Propitiation. 1 *John* ii. 1, 2.

from which it is dispensed in the Forgiveness of Sins, and in compassionate Relief under all our Straits and Miseries; and may find Favour in God's Sight through his Son, together with all the gracious Assistances and Supplies, in answer to our seeking them, that we need to succour, support and comfort us, and to perform all things for us, in the most seasonable Manner, and at the most seasonable Times, in all our Wants, Distresses and Difficulties of every Kind, and particularly in every extraordinary Trouble, Temptation and Danger, that now attend, or ever may befal us all our Lives long, till we get to Heaven.

Recollections.

How antient is the Gospel of Salvation by Jesus Christ! It has been all along the same, for Substance, under various Dispensations, and different Degrees of Light, from the Fall of *Adam* to New Testament-Times: The Promise of evangelical and eternal Rest, is now set before us with the clearest Evidence in the preaching of the Gospel; but our hearing it will be of no saving Advantage to us, unless it be mixed with Faith. How should we therefore dread the Thought of taking up with any thing short of an effectual Faith, to receive and digest what we hear, lest God should swear in his Wrath against us, as he did against the unbelieving *Israelites*, that we shall never enter into his Rest! But true Believers do, and shall enter into a better Rest, than that of the Land of *Canaan*; a spiritual Rest in this World, and an everlasting Rest in Heaven, which is a delightful and holy Sabbatism founded on Christ's resting from his mediatorial Labours and Sufferings on Earth, when he had finished the Work of *Redemption*, as the seventh Day-Sabbath was founded upon God's having ceased from his *creating* Work, when he had finished it.——How efficacious is the written Word of God in the Hand of Christ, the living and life-giving Word! He sets it home with Power and Penetration upon the Heart, and gives the Soul a plain View of itself, either for its Reformation and Comfort, or its Condemnation and Confusion. How awful, adoring and endearing should our Thoughts of Christ be! All Things are continually and exactly open to his all-seeing Eye: As he is God the Word, he narrowly inspects and observes the most secret Dispositions and Designs of our Hearts; and we have the most important of all Concerns to transact with him, and must give an Account of all that we think, say, or do, to him, as our Judge at the great Day. O solemn Considerations! But how sweetly are they temper'd by believing Views of him as the Son of God, our great atoning and interceding High Priest and almighty Saviour! He has been exercised in our Nature and World with the very same Sort of Temptations, inward and outward, as we ourselves are; and he, still remembring what he suffered by them without Sin, compassionates us under ours, though, alas! attended with Sin; and is gone into the Heaven of Heavens now to appear in the Presence of God for us. What an Encouragement is this to hold fast our Faith in him, and stedfastly abide by our holy Profession of his Name; and to come with humble Boldness and holy Freedom of Spirit to God, through him, as on a Throne of Grace, at all Times, and especially in the worst of Trials, Fears and Dangers, for all the seasonable Mercy and Grace we stand in need of, to forgive our Sins, and relieve us under all our Troubles!

CHAP. V.

The Apostle sets forth the Office and Duty of a High Priest, 1—4. *Shows how abundantly this is answer'd in Christ's super-eminent Call to, and Discharge of that Office,* 5—10. *And reproves the Christian-*Hebrews *for their Slothfulness and little Progress in the Knowledge of the Truths of the Gospel that were prefigured by the Law,* 11—14.

TEXT.

TEXT.

1 *FOR every High Priest taken from among Men, is ordained for Men in Things* pertaining *to God, that he may offer both Gifts and Sacrifices for Sins:*

PARAPHRASE.

1. WE may comfortably hope for all seasonable Mercy and Help in our Applications to a Throne of Grace, while we think of Jesus the Son of God, as appearing there in the Character of our great and sympathizing High Priest to introduce us to it; and we may be sure of his Compassion towards us in the Execution of his Office on our Behalf: For even under the legal Dispensation, which was typical of the Gospel-State, every High Priest was singled out, sanctified and set apart to his Office, from among the Children of *Israel,* (Ex. xxviii. 1) as one Partaker of the same Human Nature with them, that he might be a proper High Priest for *Men,* as he was appointed and constituted to represent and transact for *Men,* and might in their Name and Stead, and for their Benefit, present all Kind of legal Offerings to God for appeasing him on account of their Sins, whether they were Free-will Offerings, or such as were statedly fixed and determined by the Law, or whether they were Offerings of animate or inanimate Things by way of Sacrifice: And so he typified Christ our great High Priest, who *took not on him the Nature of Angels, but the Seed of Abraham, and was in all Things made like unto his Brethren,* that, by a more excellent and truely atoning Sacrifice of himself, he might make Reconciliation for the Sins of his People; (*Chap.* ii. 16. 17) and that their Persons and Prayers might be accepted of God, as presented by, and through him.

2 *Who can have Compassion on the Ignorant, and on them that are out of the Way; for that he himself also is compassed with Infirmity.*

2. Every legal High Priest is, or ought to be one, who can (μετριοπαθειν) reasonably bear with, and tenderly pity and condescend to, the Frailties and Weaknesses of the People, for whom he officiates, that he may offer Sacrifices for their Sins of Ignorance, and may sympathize with, and not be incensed against them, on account of their Errors of various Kinds, whereby they have stray'd from the Way of God's Commandments into the Ways of Sin, and from the Way of Safety or Relief into the Way of Misery and Danger; and so are out of the Way of Truth and Holiness, Comfort and Happiness: He is qualified for exercising all Compassion toward them; because even he himself, (επει και αυτος) as a Man and a Sinner, is also attended with the like moral, as well as natural Infirmities that they labour under. And the Forbearance and Compassion of Jesus, our great High Priest, towards ignorant Souls, and Sinners that are gone astray, like lost Sheep, is incomparably more excellent and effectual; because he himself has been surrounded with all natural human Weaknesses, Temptations and Afflictions, though without Sin. (*Chap.* iv. 15.)

3 *And by Reason hereof he ought, as for the People, so also*

3. And by Reason of the sinful, as well as natural Infirmities, that always beset or encompassed the legal High Priest, it was incumbent upon him, in the Discharge of his Function,

for himself, to offer for Sins.

Function, to offer up propitiatory Sacrifices, not only for the Sins *of the People* whom he represented; but likewise for his own *personal* Sins; (*Lev.* iv. 3, and ix. 7, and xvi. 6) he as much as they needing an Atonement, while they were all, in common, Sinners against God: But herein our blessed Lord has infinitely the Preference to any former High Priest, since he being sinless had no Occasion to offer any Sacrifice for himself, but only for his People, that the whole Virtue of it might be placed to their Account, and that he might the more feelingly pity them under all their Troubles on account of their Sins, as remembring what he suffer'd in making an Expiation for them.

4 *And no Man taketh this Honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as* was *Aaron*:

4. And it was further necessary, according to the Law, that no Man whatsoever should of his own Head intrude into, or assume to himself the high Honour and Dignity of the Priesthood, for attempting which *Uzziah*, tho' a King, was severely rebuked and punished: (2 *Chron.* xxvi. 16.) But he only was to be advanced to that sacred Office, whom God called and authorized, by special Order and immediate Appointment, to be invested with, and to execute it, as he did *Aaron* and his Sons at the first setting up of the Levitical Priesthood. (*Ex.* xxviii. 1, and 1 *Chron.* xxiii. 15.)

5 *So also Christ glorified not himself, to be made an High Priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee.*

5. So, in like Manner, our Lord Jesus, the anointed Saviour, did not in his incarnate State raise himself up, by any private Act of his own, to the Honour of the Gospel High Priesthood, any more than *Aaron* did to that, which he was advanced to; but he was eternally appointed, and in due Time solemnly called to, qualified for, and actually invested with this glorious Office, which was an Honour conferred upon him, as *Man*, (See the Note on *ver* 8) by the immediate Designation of God the Father himself, who, as is testified (*Ps.* ii. 7) said to him, *Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee*; by which he intimated * both the Dignity of his Person, as his eternal Son, and the Excellency and Authority of his priestly Office, as both should be demonstrated and own'd of God the Father by his Resurrection from the Dead, in consequence of his having fully satisfied divine Justice by that one Offering of himself in his

* To suppose, with some, that the Passage here quoted from *Ps.* ii. 7, *Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee*, refers, not to the divine Nature, but *merely* to the priestly Office of Christ, seems directly inconsistent with, *ver.* 8, where 'tis said, *though he were a Son, yet learned he Obedience by the Things which he suffered.* And though Christ's Priesthood, as well as Sonship, was solemnly declared by his Resurrection from the Dead, I can by no means think, with others, that he was not an High Priest, or did not perform any Part of his priestly Office upon Earth; or that it commenced after his Resurrection and Ascension to Heaven: For *offering Sacrifice* was a principal Part of the Priest's Office; and Christ's *Death* is frequently spoken of throughout this Epistle as a *Sacrifice*, which necessarily supposes him to be a PRIEST before he offered it; since all the typical Priests were actually invested in their Office before they could offer any Sacrifice under the Law; and this we are told our Lord did, when *through the eternal Spirit he offered himself without Spot to God; and once in the End of the World appeared to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself*, and so *was offered to bear the Sins of many*. (Chap. ix. 14, 26, 28.)

Death, *whereby he perfected for ever them that are sanctified.* (Chap. x. 14.)

6 *As he saith also in another* Place, *Thou* art *a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedec.*

6. And we have a still more express Testimony to Christ's Priesthood in *Ps.* cx. 4, where God the Father said to his Son, Thou art and shalt be an eternal High Priest, not after the Order of *Aaron*, whose Priesthood ran in a continual Line of Succession, from Age to Age, in his Family; but after the superior Order of the renowned *Melchisedec*, (See the Notes on *ver.* 10) who had no Predecessor or Successor in his Office, which was confined to himself alone; and so was the more eminent and lively Type of the Priesthood of Christ, as that was to abide in his own Person alone and for ever, without any one's preceding, or following him, or sharing with him, in the Dignity and Work of his Priesthood; but was to manage all the high Affairs and Concerns of it wholly and alone by himself.

7 *Who in the Days of his Flesh, when he had offered up Prayers and Supplications, with strong Crying and Tears unto him that was able to save him from Death, and was heard, in that he feared.*

7. Who while he was here upon Earth, clothed with Flesh and Blood, and all the sinless Frailties and Infirmities of human Nature, and liable to all Sorts of Calamities; and who, in the Sufferings he endured under a Sense of divine Wrath, which he was to bear for our Sins in the Discharge of his priestly Office, was *sore amazed and exceeding sorrowful even unto Death*, pray'd that, if it were possible, the Hour might pass from him, when, together with the Offering of himself, he presented his earnest Addresses in the most fervent, humble and pathetic Manner, yea, even with a loud Cry, and weeping Petitions and Entreaties unto God his Father, who (if he pleased) could have delivered him from the Terrors of the Death which lay before him. (See *Mark* xiv. 33—36, and xv. 34.) And he was heard, so as to be accepted in his Prayer; and was answered, tho' not by a Prevention of his Sufferings and Death themselves; (which he knew would be so extremely agonizing that human Nature, as such, could not but be sorely afraid of them) yet as to the main Intention of his importunate Prayer, in the seasonable Assistances that were afforded him; in the Composure of his human Passions; in his Resurrection, and Victory over Death; and in his obtaining all the desired Ends of his Sufferings, for the Glory of God and the Redemption of the Church: And he was thus heard, because of his holy Reverence (εὐλαβείας) of his heavenly Father.

8 *Though he were a Son, yet learned he Obedience, by the*

8. Though he was the eternal Son of God, the same in Nature and Perfections with the Father, and infinitely dear to him,* who called him to be an High Priest; yet having

* This Passage, as appears to me, stands in a beautiful Opposition to *ver.* 5. *There*, considering Christ as *Man*, his priestly Office is spoken of as *an Honour* conferred upon him; but *here*, considering him as *the Son of God*, 'tis rather spoken of as *a Condescension* in him to engage in it, and go through the Services and Sufferings he was called to thereby.

assumed

Things which he suffered:

assumed human Nature, that he might therein execute his priestly Office, as his Father's Servant, such was his Zeal for glorifying him, and his Love to the Church, that he submitted, with an Exercise of Faith, Patience, Self-denial, Resignation, and all Humility and Readiness of Mind and Heart, practically to learn what it is to be obedient, and how good it is to be so, to his Father's Will and Command, even unto the Death of the Cross; (*John* x. 18, and *Phil.* ii. 7, 8) yea, he condescended to learn, by severe Experience, what terrible Difficulties and Distresses, and yet what rich Advantages, attended his Obedience all his Life long, and especially when he came to die, by his enduring all those Things, which he was called to suffer in making Atonement for Sin: He also hereby experimentally learned the Trials and Difficulties of the Obedience, which his People are called to, that he might the better sympathize with, and succour them. (*Chap.* iv. 15.)

9 *And being made perfect, he became the Author of eternal Salvation unto all them that obey him;*

9. And, having completed his Obedience and Sufferings unto Death, and being thereupon fully consecrated to the Whole of his Priesthood for making Intercession, in Virtue of his Sacrifice, (*Chap.* ii. 10, see the Notes there, and on *John* xvii. 17) he became the procuring and efficient Cause (αἴτιος) of Salvation, as he purchased it by his Blood, in the Virtue of which he secures it by his Advocacy, and actually gives it by his Spirit and Grace: And the Salvation, which he is the Author of, is not such a temporal Deliverance from Evil, as *Israel* had out of *Egypt*, or as the People of the *Jews* had from *temporal Punishments* by their legal Offerings, or as many Believers shall have from the common Destruction that is coming upon *Jerusalem*; but a Salvation of an infinitely more excellent and durable Nature, even a spiritual, complete and everlasting Salvation, inclusive of a Deliverance from all Evil, and of all the Blessings of Grace and Glory, to all and every one of them, and of them only, that diligently hearken, and yield themselves up to him, as the Captain of their Salvation, (*Chap.* ii. 10) for all Holiness, as well as Happiness, by the Obedience of Faith. (*Rom.* xvi. 26.)

10 *Called of God an High Priest after the Order of Melchisedec.*

10. Even to him, who is *named* of God in an extraordinary Manner, * as he stiled him an High Priest, not after the common Way and Course of *Aaron* and his Sons according to the Law, in which there was a Succession of Priests of the same Order; but according to the more emi-

* Here the Apostle refers to what he had said, *ver.* 6, about Christ's being *a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedec*; but expresses his being *called of God* by a very different Word in the *Greek*, (προσαγορευθεὶς) from that which is also render'd *called* (καλούμενος) *of God, as was* Aaron; (ver 4) *There* it relates to his being *invested* with his Office; but *here* it relates to *the Denomination*, which God gave him as so invested, namely, that of an *High Priest after the Order of* Melchisedec.

 nent

nent Manner, in which † *Melchisedec* was called the *Priest of the most high God*; there being the greatest Resemblance between the Priesthood of that extraordinary Man and of our Lord Jesus, as may be shewn hereafter. (*Chap.* vii.)

11 *Of whom we have many Things to say, and hard to be utter'd, seeing ye are dull of hearing.*

11. Concerning which *Melchisedec*,* as he was a Type of Christ in his *kingly*, and especially in his *priestly* Office, we, Christ's ministring Servants, have many important Things to deliver; Things which are difficult to be explained, so as to convey familiar and exact Ideas of them to your Minds, and are *hard to be understood by you*, (δυσνοητα 2 *Pet.* iii. 16) not merely from the Sublimity of the Subject, or from my Manner of representing it; but chiefly from your own Indisposition to receive it; because many of you, at least, who have been too apt to stick to the Letter of the Law, and are too slothful (νωθροι) to enquire carefully into the Gospel-Revelation, are very backward to attend to, and receive what I have to offer about it.

12 *For when for the Time ye ought to be Teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first Principles of the Oracles of God; and are become such as have need of Milk, and not of strong Meat.*

12. For when, considering your long standing in Christ's School, and the Clearness of the Gospel-Revelation, and the Advantages for Instruction which have often been afforded you, (*Chap.* ii. 1—3, and vi. 7) ye ought to have made such Proficiency in the Knowledge of Christ, as to be yourselves capable of, and to have engaged, some in privately, and some in publickly instructing others about the great Doctrines of the Gospel; ye, on the other Hand, have made such little Progress in Knowledge, that, instead of being Teachers of others, ye stand in need of one to instruct you over again into the Nature of the very first Rudiments, Grounds and Principles of the Christian-Faith, that were shadowed out in the sacred Writings of the *Old Testament*, and are more clearly revealed in the *New*, both of which, being delivered under divine Inspiration, are to be esteemed (what they are in Truth) the infallible Dictates

† Who this *Melchisedec* was must needs be very uncertain, since the Holy Ghost himself seems to have concealed it on Purpose, that he might be a more eminent Type of Christ, as he was some unknown King and Priest of *Salem* or *Jerusalem*, who appeared in a superior Character to *Abraham*, Gen. xiv. 18—20. And though our Apostle says in the next Verse, that *he had many Things to say of him, and hard to be uttered*, and goes largely into the Consideration of him, *Chap.* vii; yet he no where tells us who he was, which we may reasonably suppose he would have done, had God revealed it to him; and if he did not know this, 'tis too curious and vain for us to pretend to determine it: And therefore I rather chuse to leave the Matter, as designed to be concealed from us, than to offer Conjectures about it, as some have done, who, among other Guesses, incline to think that it was the *Son of God himself*, while to others it appears very improbable that he should be a Type of himself, who is spoken of as *another Priest after the Order of Melchisedec*, and after *the Similitude of Melchisedec*, (Chap. vii. 11, 15) which naturally supposes them to be different Persons.

* The Apostle defers his designed Discourse about *Melchisedec* as a Type of Christ to *Chap.* vii. that he might take an Occasion from this Hint, to deal closely with the *Hebrews* in a needful and important Digression in the remaining Verses of this Chapter, and to the End of the *sixth*, about their Stupidity and Inattention, and consequently their small Proficiency in the Knowledge of such Things, as they might reasonably have been expected to have attained to in a greater Degree than they had, considering the Length of their Standing in Christianity, and the Light which was cast by the Gospel on *Jewish* Ordinances.

or Sayings of God himself: And so exceedingly dull of hearing are some of you, as to have rather *declined*, than *grown* in the Knowledge of spiritual Things; insomuch that ye appear to be so weak and low in your Relish and Conceptions of them, as to need to be led into those plainest and most familiar Articles of Christianity, which (to borrow an Allusion to corporal Things) may be compared to Milk, that is of easy Digestion; instead of being taught the higher Truths of the Gospel, in the Accomplishment of antient Types of the Person and Offices of Christ, which may be compared to such strong Meat, as is of harder Digestion.

13 For every one that used Milk, is unskilful in the Word of Righteousness: For he is a Babe.

13. For every one, whose spiritual Constitution and Attainments are so weak and child-like, that he has no Appetite for, nor can take in and digest, any thing but the very first Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, (*Chap.* vi. 1) which are like Milk for Babes; Whatever general Notions he may have, he is like an unexperienced Person, (ἄπειρος) and is inexpert at understanding, receiving and improving the great Truths of the Gospel, *in which the Righteousness of God is revealed from Faith to Faith*, (Rom. i. 17) and *Christ is* said to be *the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believes*; (Rom. x. 4) and in which we are taught to live in the Practice of Righteousness: (*Tit.* ii. 11, 12) For he that can only entertain, and profit by the easiest and most familiar Principles of Christian Religion, appears to be no better than a Babe in his Knowledge and Improvement of the Gospel.

14 But strong Meat belongeth to them that are of full Age, even *those who by Reason of Use have their Senses exercised to discern both Good and Evil.*

14. But the sublimer Doctrines, which may be compar'd to strong Meat, are most fit and proper for, and suited to the Nourishment of, those Believers, who, like Men grown up to Maturity, are far advanced in the Knowledge of the Doctrines of Christ; (See the Note 1 *Cor.* ii. 6.) and so, compared with Babes, may be stiled perfect; (τελείων) even such as by Means of an experimental Acquaintance with these divine Things, according to the Gospel-Discovery of them, and by long Custom and Habits of conversing with them, which they have attained, under divine Influence, by Reading, Hearing, Meditation and Prayer, have their spiritual Senses understandingly and feelingly employed and improved, to discern and distinguish between what is good or bad, true or false, pernicious or beneficial, detracting from or perfective of the Gospel-Scheme; and know how to refuse the one, and embrace the other.

RECOLLECTIONS.

Behold the incomparable Excellence and affecting Endearments of Christ's Priesthood! He, being as truly Man, as God, has a more tender and effectual Compassion on the ignorant and them that are out of the Way, than any of the ancient Priests could have, who were beset with the same *sinful*, as well as *natural* Infirmities with them; and therefore were obliged to offer

offer Sacrifices for themselves, as well as for the People: But as our *sinless* High Priest suffered in the Days of his Humiliation, to the greatest Extremity, for the Sins of his People, he can't but sympathize with them. With what Fervency did he, in the most religious and submissive Manner, apply to his heavenly Father for seasonable Relief against those Troubles, that could not but be very terrible to Human Nature; and how fully was he answered, with respect to the grand Design of his Prayer! As he was perfectly fitted by his Sufferings for compleating his priestly Office, he is become the Author of eternal Salvation to all, that yield themselves up by Faith and holy Obedience to him. How great is the *Honour* that was put upon him, as *Man*; and his own *Condescension*, as *God*, in bearing this important Office! He did not thrust himself into it; but it was conferred upon him by the express and immediate Call of God his Father, as the Levitical Priesthood was upon *Aaron*; and 'tis manifest what a divine and glorious High Priest he is, in that his Father said to him, *Thou art my Son, to Day have I begotten thee; and thou art a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedec.* Though he was the eternal Son of God, yet, adorable Condescension! how freely did he accept the Call to Office-Work, and experimentally learn Obedience by his Sufferings unto Death! But, alas, how often are professing Believers themselves too little apprehensive of the Glories of Christ, as shadowed out by *Melchisedec* in various Instances, and of the Doctrine of Righteousness through him! They are apt to be so slothful and inattentive to them, that they can't take in just Sentiments of them; but when for their Standing and Advantages in the Church, they might reasonably be expected to have such a Stock of Scriptural Knowledge, as to be able to instruct others, they themselves need to be taught over again the very first Principles of Christianity. But, blessed be God, there are Provisions of all Sorts in his Word for every State and Condition of his People; there is Milk for Babes, and strong Meat for those that are arrived at a State of Manhood in Christ, and are more skilful in the Word of Righteousness, as by Means of frequent Use, and great Experience, they are confirm'd in Habits of Knowledge and Grace, and have their spiritual Senses exercis'd to discern the Difference between what is good and bad, and to relish the one and refuse the other. How should this Consideration excite us to the greatest Diligence, that we may not always be like Children in Understanding; but may live upon such sublime Truths of the Gospel, as are suited to the Nourishment of strong Men in Christ!

CHAP. VI.

The Apostle intimates his Design of giving the Hebrews *higher Instructions, and excites them to greater Proficiency, than they had yet made in the Doctrine of Christ,* 1—3. *To enforce this upon them, he describes the dreadful Nature and Consequence of Apostacy in the most moving Strains,* 4—8. *Sweetly insinuates his great Satisfaction, as to the better Part of them, notwithstanding what he had been saying about Apostates,* 9, 10. *And encourages them to Perseverance in Faith and Holiness, from the Experience of other sincere Believers, and from the Promise and Oath of God to* Abraham, *and to all the Heirs of Salvation,* 11—20.

TEXT.

1 *THerefore leaving the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto Perfection; not laying again the Foundation of Repentance from dead Works, and of Faith towards God,*

PARAPHRASE.

1. SINCE 'tis unworthy the Character of Christians to be always Children, instead of Men in Understanding, (*Chap.* v. 11—14.) Let us therefore dismiss, for the present, what relates to the first Principles of Christianity, without insisting particularly upon them, which, how important soever they be, are like Milk for Babes; (*Chap.* v. 12, 13.) and let us proceed to discourse of, and to embrace with holy Care and Diligence, those great Mysteries of the Gospel, that may bring us to more advanced Degrees of

spiritual

spiritual Understanding, such as are like *strong Meat, fit for those that are of full Age,* (Chap. v. 14.) And, comparatively speaking, may be called a Perfection in the Knowledge of the sublimer Points of Faith, relating to the Person and Offices, and particularly to *the Priesthood* of Christ, *'till we all come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, and unto the Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ.* (Ephes. iv. 13.) I therefore decline insisting on *first Principles,* that we who preach, and ye who hear, may not always be laying the Foundation, and stop there, without building upon it: The *Principles* I mean are such as these. * One is the Doctrine of *Evangelical Repentance,* which consists in a thorough Sense of the Evil of Sin, as committed against God; in deep Humiliation and Grief of Soul for it, and utter Detestation of it; and, under Apprehensions of the Mercy of God through Christ, in turning to him from all Iniquities, which may be called dead Works, as they are practised by those that are dead in Trespasses and Sins, and as they deserve, tend to, and entail, not only temporal Death, but also the Destruction of the Souls of those that are under their Guilt and Power, and will certainly issue in it, (which is the second Death) unless repented of and graciously pardoned. And another of these Principles is the Doctrine of *Faith* towards our Lord Jesus Christ, and toward God through him (*Acts* xx. 21.) which is inseparably connected

* 'Tis extremely difficult, and Expositors are much at a Loss, to determine the Sense of this, and the following Articles to the End of the second Verse, which are here called *the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ,* and *the Foundation of Repentance,* &c. Some understand them to mean the *first Principles of Christianity;* and others, the Principles *of Judaism* as contained in the Doctrine of the Old Testament, and particularly of the ceremonial Law, which gave a shadowy Representation of Christ, and laid a Foundation for the fuller Discoveries, that were to be made of him under the Gospel Dispensation. But, after the closest Enquiry, I have been able to make, they that go into the *last* of these Ways of interpreting *all* these Passages appear to me, either to put too great a Force upon *some* of them; or else to make some too *coincident* with others of them; and they that choose the *first* Way of interpreting them, seem to be exceedingly puzzled, how to account for *the Doctrine of Baptisms, and of Laying on of Hands,* as belonging to the *first Principles* of Christianity. And I own, that I can't meet with Satisfaction from any Author, in either of these Ways of Interpretation; because each Side is apparently pressed with great, and to me insuperable Difficulties, in their respective Ways of accounting for *all* the Particulars here mentioned, which may be seen in *Pool's Synopsis, Grotius, Owen, Hammond,* [illegible] and others; and which rather bewilder than instruct me. But, in my humble Opinion, we may avoid many Difficulties, and steer a much clearer Course between the two former, if we consider the *Doctrine of Baptisms,* and *Laying on of Hands,* as a Parenthesis, referring to *Jewish Washings,* and [illegible] *on the Heads of their Sacrifices,* the Doctrines of which Rites were, *Repentance from dead Works,* [illegible] *toward God;* and if we consider *Repentance from dead Works, Faith toward God,* [illegible] *of the Dead,* and *eternal Judgment,* as the first Rudiments of *Christianity;* and so the [illegible] and *Laying on of Hands* are to be considered, not as distinct Principles from the rest; but as [illegible] under the Mosaic Law, of the *Repentance* and *Faith* just before mentioned. Accordingly 'tis to be observed that tho' the Doctrines of *Repentance* and *Faith* are intended, yet the Word *D*[illegible] is not prefixed to them in the *Greek,* but only to *Baptisms* and *Laying on of Hands,* which leads us to think that they were the Doctrines taught by those Ceremonies; and then the Principles themselves will not be *six,* as they are commonly reckon'd, but only *four,* which are very properly specified as plain and fundamental Principles of Christian Religion. This, if I am not much mistaken, gives us a more easy and consistent View of these Verses, than any Thing that has occurred to me, either in reading or meditating upon them.

with

with true Repentance, and consists in a firm Belief of God's Being and Perfections, and in an humble Trust in him, according to Gospel-discoveries of divine Grace for the Remission of Sins, thro' Jesus Christ, as an Accomplishment of antient Promises, Types and Predictions of him.

2 Of the Doctrine of Baptisms, and of laying on of Hands, and of Resurrection of the Dead, and of eternal Judgment.

2. (These *two* Principles of Christianity were signified by various *Washings* under the ceremonial Law, (*Chap.* ix. 10.) which held forth the Doctrine of Purification, and were prefigurative of the cleansing Virtue of the Blood and Spirit of Christ; and were further signified by the laying of the *Hands* of the Representatives of the People on the Heads of the Sacrifices, and particularly in the great Day of Atonement, (*Lev.* xvi. 21, 22, 29, 30.) which was attended with penitent Confessions of Sin, and directed the Faith of *Israel* to the truly proper and effectually atoning Sacrifice of Jesus our High Priest:) And besides these, there are *two other* first Principles, that are Motives to this Faith and Repentance, namely, the fundamental Doctrine of *the Resurrection* of the Bodies both of the Righteous and the Wicked, *one to everlasting Life, and the other to Shame and everlasting Contempt,* (Daniel xii. 2.) which is fully confirmed, and further cleared up by the Gospel-Revelation, in which our Lord himself has plainly told us, *All that are in their Graves shall hear his Voice, and come forth; they that have done Good, unto the Resurrection of Life; and they that have done Evil, unto the Resurrection of Damnation:* (John v. 28, 29.) And this leads us to the great Article of the awful and *final Judgment*, that shall ensue upon the Resurrection of all Mankind, who must *appear before the Judgment-Seat of Christ*, (Rom. xiv. 10, 11, and 2 Cor. v. 10.) and that will determine their State of Happiness or Misery for all Eternity, * *as the Wicked shall go away into everlasting Punishment, and the Righteous into Life eternal*, (Mat. xxv. 34—46.)

3 And this will we do, if God permit.

3. And as ye have been sufficiently taught these important Doctrines, and ought never to forget them, but seriously reflect upon them, all your Days, and will do so, unless it be your own Fault through Stupidity and Sloth, (*Chap.* v. 11.) I shall pass them by, and pursue my Design of leading you hereafter (*Chap.* vii.) to the still sublimer Parts of the Gospel, relating to Christ and his Priesthood, to prevent your apostatizing from him, if God shall favour me with the Continuance of Life (*James* iv. 15.) and of gracious Assistances, and shall give me Opportunity of transmitting this Epistle before it be too late: And should it be too late for any of you, dreadful would your Case be indeed.

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* Though the *Judgment* itself will be dispatch'd in a certain Limit of Time, it may be called *eternal Judgment*, with respect to its being irreversibly decisive without Appeal, and to its eternal Effects, as Christ is said to have *obtained eternal Redemption for us,* though the Price of it was paid at once, *when he appeared to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself.* (Chap. ix. 12, 26.)

4. For

4 *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly Gift, and were made Partakers of the Holy Ghost,*

4. For the State of those Professors of Christianity, that turn utter Apostates, * is really desperate, past all Hope of their being ever reclaimed by any Means whatsoever, who have been once so far illuminated in their Minds, † by the preaching of the Gospel, and the common, or, at most, miraculous Operations of the Spirit, as doctrinally *to receive the Knowledge of the Truth*; (Chap. x. 26.) and that have made some Experiment, and had some Relish of the Dispensation of Grace, set up by the Gospel under the Conduct and Inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who is by Way of Eminence *the Gift of God*, and *that* with a particular Regard to his miraculous *Operations*, (Acts viii. 20.) and is sent down from Heaven by the exalted Head and Saviour; (*Acts* ii. 33, and 1 *Peter* i. 12.) and have been made Partakers of the miraculous *Gifts* of the Holy Ghost, such as *Prophecy, discerning of Spirits, several Kinds of Tongues, and Interpretation of Tongues*; (1 Cor. xii. 10.)

5 *And have tasted the good Word of God,*

5. And have seen such divine Credentials of the Word of God, as carried Conviction to their Consciences of its Truth and Goodness, and gave them some Taste of its Excellency,

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* Various are the Sentiments of Expositors on the *descriptive Characters* of the Persons, intended in this and the next Verse; and 'tis not very easy to keep the Ideas distinct, that are design'd to be convey'd, particularly, by their having *tasted the heavenly Gift, been made Partakers of the Holy Ghost, and the Powers of the World to come.* But as I take them all to relate to the *extraordinary Dispensation*, and *miraculous Gifts* of the Holy Ghost in the Apostle's Days, I have endeavoured to give such an Account of them, as I apprehend to be most probable, and least interfering one with another. And that none of them signify any *special and saving* Operation of the Spirit, is very evident to me; because here is no mention made of *Faith, Love,* or *any other Grace*; nor of *Holiness* or *Obedience*; nor of any of the *Blessings of Salvation*; and the Apostle seems carefully to keep to the Word *tasting*, to express what Experience they had of the Gospel, and of the Dispensation, Gifts and Powers of the Holy Ghost, to intimate that they had so much Knowledge and Taste of those Things, as was sufficient to enable them to make a fair Trial of them, though they did not so far relish and approve of them, upon the Trial, as cordially to receive, and feed by Faith upon them, and digest them to their spiritual Nourishment; but were, after all, like barren Ground, on which the Rain often comes, and yet bears nothing but *Briars and Thorns*, in Distinction from that good Ground, which *brings forth Herbs*, ver. 7, 8; and *true Believers* are distinguished from them, as Persons, of whom the Apostle *was perswaded better Things, even Things that accompany Salvation*, and whom he describes by their *Work and Labour of Love*, which God in his Righteousness, or Faithfulness to his Covenant, *would not forget*, ver. 9, 10; and he speaks of the *Immutability of his Counsel*, with regard to *their* Salvation, *ver.* 17, 18, 19. So that there can be no Argument drawn from hence for falling from Grace; there being no Appearance of *any one special Grace* in these Persons: Nor is there any Ground for the Distress, that many gracious Souls have been thrown into, from a Misunderstanding of these Passages, as if, on Account of their Backsliding, and lesser Falls into one or another Sin, it were impossible for them to be renew'd to Repentance: For the Apostle here speaks of only *utter Apostates*, that never had the Truth of Grace in their own Souls, and fell away from the Profession of Christianity, after they had entered upon it, and had received the greatest Advantages in the Nature of Means, that could be imagined, or ever should be afforded, even by miraculous Operations of the Spirit, to engage them to continue stedfast in it; and so they seem to have approached very near to, if not been actually guilty of the *Sin against the Holy Ghost*. (See the Notes on *Mat.* xii. 31, and 1 *John* v. 18.)

† Some suppose that as the Word, (φωτισθέντας) here rendered *enlightned*, was often used by the Antients with relation to *Baptism*, the Apostle means them that had been *baptised*. But it don't appear that this Word was ever used in that *mystical* Sense, 'till the *second* or *third* Century by *Justin Martyr* (Dial. II.) and *Clemens Alexandrinus*; (Lib. I. Cap. 6.) nor do we find any such Signification of it in all the *New Testament*, where it constantly relates to the *Light* or *Knowledge*, whereby the Mind is enlightened; and particularly in that parallel Place, where the Apostle speaks of these *Hebrews having been illuminated*, as a Term of the same Import with their *having received the Knowledge of the Truth*. (Chap. x. 26, 32.

and the Powers of the World to come,

which struck their Affections with such a Sort of Pleasure, as our Lord describes in the *stony Ground Hearers, that received the good Seed of the Word with Joy for a while, but had no Root in themselves;* (Mat. xiii. 20, 21.) or as those felt, that attended on *John* the *Baptist*'s Ministry, who *for a Season rejoiced in his Light*; (John v. 35.) and have tasted the wonderful Powers, that were exerted in producing *other Miracles*, over and above, and as distinguished from, the forementioned *Gifts* of the holy Ghost, (See the Note on 1 *Cor.* xii. 10) such as healing the Sick, and raising the Dead, that were wrought in Confirmation of the Gospel, which, as the last Dispensation that was to succeed those that were before the Law, and under the Law, has been usually called by the *Jews*, and has been already spoken of in this Epistle, as *the World to come.* (Chap. ii. 5.)

6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto Repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him *to an open Shame.*

6. If such as these shall sin willfully, (*Chap.* x. 26.) so as to apostatize from Christ to *Moses*, and from the Profession of the Gospel to *Judaism*, they resolutely reject the only Remedy for their Recovery; and are so righteously given up of God to a desperate and voluntarily contracted Blindness and Hardness of their own Hearts, that there is no Room left for any Expectation of the least Possibility, by any Means whatsoever, of their being so effectually renewed and changed in the Temper of their Minds and Hearts, as to recover them to a just Sense of their Crimes, and sincere Repentance to the saving of their Souls; because they, in effect, approve of the Wickedness of the *Jews* in crucifying the eternal Son of God, and shew that they themselves would put him to the ignominious and painful Death of the Cross over again, as an Impostor, had they Opportunity for it; they also persecute him again in his Members; and they expose his Character to the vilest Reproach, by renouncing him and their Profession of him, as though he really had been as infamous a Person, as his Crucifiers pretended, and were not fit to be trusted in, adhered to, or acknowledged as a divine Person, or as the true Messiah; and as though, after Trial, they had found that there is neither Truth nor Goodness in him, or in his Gospel; and so they most perversely shut themselves out from all the Benefit of his Crucifixion, and cause his glorious Name to be blasphemed in the World.

7 For the Earth which drinketh in the Rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth Herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth Blessing from God:

7. For, to show the Difference between true Believers and those that are only Partakers of the Illuminations and miraculous Operations of the Spirit, by a Similitude taken from a fruitful and barren Soil, True Believers are like *good Ground*, (Mat. xiii. 23.) which receives good Seed, and is soak'd with, and drinks in the Rain that often descends upon it in seasonable Showers, as the Word, Ordinances and Influences of the Spirit do upon the Hearts of Believers, to make them fruitful: And as, in Consequence hereof, this Sort of Earth, being thus kindly impregnated, (*τικτουσα*) brings forth

forth Grass and Corn, Flowers, and all useful Herbs, that are pleasing and profitable to those, by and for whom it is tilled and cultivated, 'tis evidently bless'd of God, as the Author of all its Increase, and he will still further command the Blessing upon it, even as he did upon the whole Earth in its original State; (*Gen.* i. 11, 29.) So true Believers, being renew'd by Grace, bring forth Fruits of Righteousness, that are by Jesus Christ acceptable to God, and for his Praise and Glory, (*Phil.* i. 11.) and are manifestly under his special Blessing, who gives their Increase; (1 *Cor.* iii. 7.) and he will further own and bless them, that they may bring forth more Fruits of Faith, Love, Holiness and Obedience, yea, all the Fruits of the Spirit, in their Hearts and Lives; and will preserve them to his heavenly Kingdom; and so command the Blessing upon them, *even Life for ever more.* (Ps. cxxxiii. 3.)

8 *But that which beareth Thorns and Briers* is *rejected, and* is *nigh unto cursing*; *whose End* is *to be burned.*

8. But, on the contrary, those Professors of Christ, that partake only of the forementioned Illuminations, external Means and Advantages, without the Truth of Grace in their Hearts, naturally produce nothing but Unbelief, Impenitence and Hardness of Heart, and every Kind of unfruitful Work of Darkness; and so are like the Ground, which God cursed after, and on Account of the Fall of Man; (*Gen.* iii. 17, 18.) and which, notwithstanding all the Rain that falls upon it, brings forth, instead of pleasant and useful Fruit, nothing but Briers and Thorns, which are offensive, unprofitable and injurious to the Owner, and therefore, upon Trial, is (αδοκιμος) disapproved of by him that manures it, even as those grievous Revolters were by the Lord, who spoke of them as *reprobate Silver, because he had rejected them:* (Jer. vi. 19, 30.) And all such barren apostate Professors are in the nearest Danger of falling under an Execution of the Curse of God upon them; and their final Issue is to be burned up, like Briers and Thorns, (*Is.* xxvii. 4.) and like Chaff, when separated from the Wheat, with unquenchable Fire, (*Mat.* iii. 12.) to their eternal Destruction, as this Earth itself shall be at the last Day. (2 *Pet.* iii. 10.)

9 *But, Beloved, we are persuaded better Things of you, and Things that accompany Salvation, though we thus speak.*

9. But as to the better Part of you, my dear Brethren, whom I look upon and love, as beloved of God, and as sincere Believers, I am very confident, that ye are favoured with much more excellent Blessings, than the Apostates before-mentioned ever have been Partakers of; and that your End shall be better than theirs, (*ver.* 7, 8.) as ye are enriched with the Blessings of special Grace, in the Renovation of your Nature, the Forgiveness of Sins, Justification and Adoption, with other distinguishing Benefits, that contain in them, stand connected with, and shall certainly issue in the eternal Salvation of your Souls (εχομενα σωτηριας); though for your Caution, and for the Terror of false Professors, I have spoke so freely of the Danger of apostatizing fror the Profession of Christ, after an Enjoyment of such hig

Privileges, as have been conferred upon them, according to what has been said about them. (*ver.* 4, 5.)

10 *For God* is *not unrighteous to forget your Work and Labour of Love, which ye have shewed toward his Name, in that ye have ministered to the Saints, and do minister.*

10. This my firm Persuasion concerning you is built upon the most solid Grounds; It rests upon the Stability of the Covenant of Grace, (*ver.* 17, 18.) and the evident Tokens of your saving Interest in it: For as God is Truth itself, we may depend upon it, that he neither is, nor ever will be * unfaithful to his own *everlasting Covenant, which is ordered in all Things, and sure*; (2 Sam. xxiii. 5.) or that, in Violation of his Promises of gracious Rewards, any more than in Unrighteousness to the Merit of his Son, He will be unmindful of your *Work of Faith and Labour of Love*, (1 Thess. i. 3.) or of that effectual and operative Faith, which he has wrought in you, and which hath produced a sincere and laborious Love, as the Principle of all holy Obedience, according to what ye have abundantly manifested, in your religious Regard to his great and blessed Name; in your reverential Subjection to his Authority and Commands; and in your serious Concern for his Honour and Glory, in that, as in many other Instances, so particularly in these Days of Peril and Reproach, ye have cheerfully and diligently attended to the various Duties of Compassion, Tenderness and Assistance, Counsel and Liberality to his poor, despised and afflicted Saints for his Sake; and still persist in all the Offices of Love and Kindness to them, on account of their peculiar Relation and holy Conformity to him, as they bear his Name and Image.

11 *And we desire that every one of you do shew the same Diligence, to the full Assurance of Hope unto the End:*

11. But, (*h*) knowing that *End* and *Means* are connected in his gracious Settlement, I can't but earnestly desire, beg of God, and intreat you to labour in his Strength, that, not only some, but all and every one of you may manifestly abound, and persevere in the same diligent Care, Study and Endeavour, as many of you have already shown, in bringing forth the genuine Fruits of Faith and Love; and that ye may do this constantly, with growing Improvement, till by these Means, and the Blessing of God upon them, ye, like a Ship that is carried to its Port with full Sails, (πληροφορίαν) shall arrive at the fullest Satisfaction, as to your own Hope of Interest in Christ, and in the Pomises of eternal Life, that it is well grounded, and shall never be disappointed; and till ye shall have this abundant Assurance of Faith and Hope, not only now and then, but with Continuance through all your Days and Christian-Course upon Earth, at the Close of which ye shall *receive the End of your Faith, even the Salvation of your Souls.* (1 Pet. i. 9.)

* *Unrighteous* (ἄδικος) sometimes signifies *unfaithful*, and is used in Opposition to *faithful* (πιστός) *Luke* xvi. 10, and *Unrighteousness* stands opposed to *Truth*, Rom. ii. 8; and this is the Sense, in which it seems to be most immediately intended here, with reference to the *Faithfulness of God* in fulfilling his new Covenant-Promises: And yet he may be said to be therein *just* to the Merit of his Son too, as the promised Blessings are the Purchase of his Blood, *Rom.* iii. 25, 26.

12 *That ye be not slothful, but Followers of them, who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promises.*

12. In order hereunto, my Heart's Desire and Prayer is, that ye may not indulge to Ease and Sloth, by being careless, indolent or negligent in the Use of the Means of Grace, or in fulfilling the Duties of your holy Profession; but may be Imitators, (μιμηταὶ) and so tread in the Steps, of those Believers in this and the former Ages, that have gone before you *; and may make the best of your Way after them; ye having as much Encouragement hereunto, as they themselves had, who through Faith in the Promises, and through a patient Expectation of their Accomplishment in due Season, and who possessing their own Souls with Patience in the mean while, under their various Trials, are now got beyond the Reach of all Troubles and Danger, and are in Possession of the heavenly Inheritance, which God had promised them, and which ye in the same Way shall, thro' Grace, be likewise made Partakers of.

13 *For when God made Promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself,*

13. And, for the further Encouragement of your Hope, and Perseverance in Faith and Patience to the End, ye ought to consider how punctually faithful and true God is in performing his Promises, and how graciously he has condescended to give us the utmost Assurance of it: For to instance in the great leading Promise, on the fulfilling of which all the rest of the promised Blessings of the new Covenant depend, When God was pleased to give *Abraham*, the Father of the Faithful, the vastly important Promise of an innumerable Offspring, from which the Messiah himself should descend, *in whom all Nations of the Earth should be blessed*, (Gen. xxii. 16, 17) he confirmed it by an Oath, (*ver.* 17) to give him the strongest Evidence that it should certainly take Effect; and because there was no God above him, or no Being superior to himself, to whom he could appeal for the Truth of what he said, as we do to *Him* in our solemn Oaths, as to one infinitely greater than our-

* By *them, who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promises* is generally understood to be meant the *Patriarchs* of old, that inherit eternal Life: But as it is said of them, *Chap.* xi. 13. *these all died in Faith, not having received the Promises*, others have thought that the *Gentiles*, who had already believed, and were Partakers of the Promises, are here intended. (See Mr. *Peirce* on the Place.) However, I think that Passage may be easily understood in a Light, very consistent with a Supposition, that the *Patriarchs* are here referred to: For though they did not actually receive the Accomplishment of the Promises of the *Messiah*, and the Blessings of the *Gospel-State* upon Earth, which are there referred to, they did receive the Promises of the *eternal Inheritance* in Heaven, which seem to be here most immediately intended, as the Upshot of all the Promises of the Covenant of Grace: And therefore if the Apostle had any View to the believing *Gentiles*, there is no need to consider it as *exclusive* of the believing *Patriarchs*: And *inheriting* the Promises signifies *actually possessing the Things promised*; for tho' *Faith* was necessary to the *Gentiles* inheriting the promised Blessings of the Gospel-State, as the Blessing of *Abraham* came upon them through Jesus Christ, and they received the Promise of the Spirit thro' Faith; (*Gal.* iii. 14) yet *Christian-Patience* must be supposed rather to follow *after* their Possession of these, than to go *before* it: Accordingly, both *Faith* and *Patience* are usually spoken of in Scripture, as *preceding*, and as the Means of Persons arriving at, the *heavenly Inheritance*, as in *Chap.* x. 36, 37, 38, and xii. 1, 2, and 2 *Thess.* iii. 5, *James* i. 3, 4, 12, and v. 7, 8, and 1 *Pet.* v. 9; and in our Context, *ver.* 15, 'tis said that *after* Abraham *had patiently endured, he obtained the Promise.*

selves, he appealed to his own Being and Perfections, and as it were pawned them for the Truth and Performance of his Promise, insomuch that he would as soon cease to *Be*, as break it.

14 *Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.*

14. Saying, I will abundantly and certainly bless thee, as with a rich Variety of the good Things of this Life, so especially with an innumerable Posterity, like the Stars of Heaven, and the Sand on the Sea-shore for Multitude; and one of thy Descendents shall be the Messiah himself, in whom not only thy natural Offspring among the *Jews*, but *Gentiles* also in every Nation of the World, even all thy spiritual Children of both Sorts, that walk in the Steps of thy Faith, shall be blessed with all spiritual and heavenly Blessings. (*Gen.* xxii. 16—18.)

15 *And so after he had patiently endured, he obtained the Promise.*

15. And accordingly, after *Abraham* had waited with Patience and Hope, under the many Trials of his Faith that he was exercised with, God fulfilled this eminent Promise in blessing him, not only with great Prosperity in worldly Affairs, but more especially in giving him a Son, and multiplying his Children while he lived; and so he enjoy'd the promised Blessing in them, as a Pledge and Earnest of all the rest, that were to be brought in by his most glorious Descendent, the Messiah himself, *whose Day he saw* with an Eye of Faith, *and was glad*; (John viii. 56) and when he came to die, he himself, through Faith in the great promised Seed, obtained the Inheritance of eternal Life, (*Luke* xvi. 23) which is the final Issue and Consummation of all the Promises, and which shall be likewise enjoy'd by all his spiritual Seed, through the Righteousness of Faith, (*Rom.* iv. 13, 16, and *Gal.* iii. 18, 22) after they, like him, shall have run with Patience the Race which is set before them, looking to Jesus, &c. (*Chap.* xii. 1, 2.) In this condescending Manner, God was pleased to give the fullest Assurance possible of his Veracity, according to the most valid and approved Method, that Men use to take to satisfy their Fellow-creatures of the Truth of what they affirm and promise.

16 *For Men verily swear by the greater: And an Oath for Confirmation is to them an End of all Strife.*

16. For it is customary with Men, on important Occasions, to bind their Depositions and Promises with an Oath; and they indeed (μὲν) as is fit in the Nature of Things, and is ordered by a divine Command, (*Deut.* vi. 13) swear by the supreme God, who is infinitely greater than themselves, to give the utmost Solemnity and Sanction to their Oath: And such Sort of Swearing, to confirm the Truth of what they say, is commonly and justly reckoned by Men the strongest, and most decisive Evidence, that can be given of the Truth of their Declarations, to the satisfying of all Doubts, determining all Debates, and silencing

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all Contradiction to the Testimony given, or to the Testifier †.

17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the Heirs of Promise the Immutability of his Counsel, confirmed it *by an Oath:*

17. In this strongest Way therefore, that Men can take to put an End to all Doubts and Controversies, the great God has stoop'd, to accommodate himself to the Weakness of Men, as being graciously inclined and resolved to give them the utmost Satisfaction, with still more abundant Evidence, than was absolutely necessary, or is commonly thought to be given barely by a Promise, that he might demonstrate to his People, whom he has made the Heirs of all the Promises, and of the Blessings included in that to *Abraham*; and might satisfy them that his Promise is as sure to them, as it was to him, and that his free and eternal Purpose and infinitely wise Counsel of Peace, which he has revealed and ascertained in the Promise, is unchangeably the same, and never shall be repealed, defeated or falsified: For this Reason, I say, he condescended so far, as to swear to it by himself, and so he has as it were sealed his Promise by a solemn Oath, interposing *that* (εμεσιτευσεν ορκω) for its Performance, to put an End to all the unbelieving Objections, Doubts and Fears, which he foresaw his own Children, under a Sense of their Unworthiness, and of the Difficulty and Unlikelihood of its Accomplishment, would be apt to raise about it.

18 That by two immutable Things, in which it was *impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong Consolation, who have fled for Refuge to lay hold upon the Hope set before us:*

18. That so by two unchangeable Things, his Promise and his Oath, in either, and much more in both, of which, it is absolutely impossible that the unalterably true and faithful God, *with whom is no Variableness, neither Shadow of Turning*, (Jam. i. 17) and who can as soon cease to be *God*, as cease to be *true*; we might have the firmest Ground possible for the most abundant, prevailing and solid Comfort, and might possess it with unshaken Confidence, and the sweetest Delight in our own Souls, to overcome all our Doubts and Fears, and support us under all our Trials and Afflictions; even we, who, like the Manslayer under the Law, that flew to the City of Refuge for his Life, (*Numb.* xxxv. 11, 12) have been enabled to fly, under a Sense of Guilt and Danger, with the utmost Eagerness and Speed, Concern and Vigour, for Deliverance from pursuing Wrath and Justice, and for Safety in Christ, the promised Seed; to apprehend and fix by Faith on him, and on the

† This shows that a *solemn Oath*, and particularly of a *promissory Nature*, like Oaths of *Fidelity* and *Allegiance*, are lawful, when taken in a religious Manner, under the Gospel-State; otherwise the Apostle would never have spoke of an Oath with so much Honour, as a proper Means of Confirmation, to put an End to all Strife; and God himself under the Law had enjoined that solemn Oaths should be taken by his People for such like Purposes in several Cases, as in *Ex.* xxii. 11, *Numb.* xxx. 2, *Deut.* vi. 13. But we may be sure that he would never have laid these Injunctions upon them, were Swearing on proper Occasions unlawful, or inexpedient: And both before the Law of *Moses*, and under it, we often read of the most religious Persons swearing themselves, and requiring an Oath from others, for the more strongly ascertaining the Truth of what they said. See among other Places *Gen.* xxi. 23, 24, and xxiv. 3, and xlvii. 31, *Josh.* ii. 12, 17, 20, *Judg.* xv. 12, and 1 *Sam.* xx. 17, and xxiv. 21, 22. (See also the Note on *Mat.* v. 34.)

Grace and Faithfulness of God through him, according to the Promises, which are all confirmed, and shall be fulfilled even to eternal Life, by him; who, together with all that is in him,* [illegible] our Faith and Hope in the Declarations and Promises of the Gospel, that we may have Recourse to him for our Support and Comfort under all Tribulations here, and for our everlasting Happiness hereafter.

19 *Which* Hope *we have as an Anchor of the Soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the Vail,*

19. Which Object of Hope, as laid hold on, or hoped and trusted in by Faith, that goes out of ourselves to it, has a mighty Efficacy, both to secure our Souls from Destruction, and to hold them fast and steady amidst all the Dangers and Troubles of this present Life, as a strong Anchor, cast out of a Ship, does the Vessel that is tossed about by the Winds and Waves of a tempestuous Sea: And as Christ himself, the Object of this Hope, is passed through the Region of the Air into the Place of God's peculiar Residence and Glory; (as the High Priest under the Law passed through the second Vail into the Holy of Holies, *Chap.* ix. 3, 7) so our Hope in Christ casts Anchor, not downwards, as other Anchors are cast down to the Bottom of the Sea; but upwards, as it enters through the visible Heavens after him, into that glorious World, which lies beyond them, and is hid by them, as by a Vail, from our corporal Sight; and there it fastens upon him, and the Father through him, as exhibited in the Promises.

20 *Whither the Fore-runner is for us entered,* even *Jesus, made an High Priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedec.*

20. Into which blessed and glorious State our exalted Head and Saviour is enter'd, not indeed like the *Aaronical* High Priests of Old, with respect to their going alone, through the Vail, into the holy Place, without any other being allow'd to go thither after them; (*Chap.* ix. 7) but as the Pledge and Earnest of our following him, that are true Believers in him, who is gone thither in a double *public* Capacity for our Safety and Happiness, and to act there for us; One is that of a *Fore-runner*, † who, as such, declares

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* *Hope* in this and, perhaps, in the next Verse, cannot well mean the *Grace* of Hope that is in us; for it's said to be a *Hope set before us*, and a Hope, which *we fly to, and lay hold upon*, in Allusion to *the Manslayers flying to the City of Refuge*, and laying hold of the Hope provided for his Security there; and 'tis called an *Anchor of the Soul sure and stedfast*, in Allusion to the Anchor of a Ship, which don't hold it stedfast, as 'tis in the Ship itself, but as cast out of it, and fastning on sure Ground at a Distance from it. *Hope* therefore there *includes*, and in this Verse *directly signifies*, the *Object* of Hope, or that which is *hoped in*, as it often does in other Places, particularly in *Acts* xxviii. 20, and 1 *Tim.* i. 1; and this Object of it most directly means *Christ*, who is *the Hope*, which is said to have *entered into that within the Vail*; and yet *the Promises*, and *God* through him, according to the Promises, which are all *Yea and Amen in him*, 2 *Cor.* i. 20, and which had been spoken of in the foregoing Context, may be considered as included together with Christ, as *the Object* of our Hope; But we cannot be said to lay hold, and cast Anchor on him, without an Exercise of *the Grace* of Hope in him.

† *A Fore-runner* is wont to be *less in Dignity*, than those that are to follow him; but Christ is infinitely superior to us, and does more for us by way of Causality, and authoritative Management *in his own Right*, than any other Fore-runner could do for those, that were to come after him; and 'tis a high Honour put upon all the Saints, that they have such a glorious Fore-runner, as *Jesus*, to appear in the Presence of God for them.

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what he has done and suffered on Earth, to make Way for our Arrival after him, and notifies in Heaven, that we in due Time and Order are coming to be there with him; he also prepares, secures and takes Possession of glorious Mansions there for us, (*John* xiv. 2, and *Ephes.* ii. 6) and makes all Things ready for our Entrance into the holiest of all after him by Faith now, (*Chap.* x. 19—22) and for our *personal* Entrance in due Time, that *we may be for ever with him, where he is, to behold his Glory.* (John xvii. 24.) And the other public Character, in which he is entered, is that of *an High Priest*, which Jesus our Saviour is, who, as has been observed, (*Chap.* v. 6) is constituted in that Office, not indeed after the Order of *Aaron*, which was temporary and successive from one Age to another; but after the much higher Order of *Melchisedec*, as an interceeding, as well as atoning High Priest, that has no Successor, but abides in his Person and Office for ever. (See the Note on *Chap.* v. 10.) This brings us to the Resemblance there is between Christ and *Melchisedec*, which was proposed (*Chap.* v. 10, 11, and vi. 1—3) to be consider'd particularly and at large; and shall be now explained in the following Comparison between them. (*Chap.* vii.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

How incumbent is it on Gospel-Professors to be progressive in all spiritual Understanding! Though the first Principles of Religion must be retained and adhered to, such as the Doctrines of *Repentance* and *Faith*, (which were signified by legal Washings and Impositions of Hands) and the Doctrines of *the Resurrection* and *a Judgment to come*; yet we ought not to stop here, but to advance forwards, in still sublimer Points of the Gospel, for further Edification in Faith, Comfort and Holiness unto complete Salvation. How great is the Danger of *mere Professors*, that are Partakers only of such Gifts of the Spirit, whether ordinary or extraordinary, as are *common* to *nominal* and *real* Christians! They may have these, and yet may have no more than such a Taste of the good Things of the Gospel, as their carnal Hearts soon dislike and reject; and so may apostatize from their Profession of Christ, and, like barren Ground that brings forth nothing but Briers and Thorns, may be disapproved of God, and in the nearest Danger of falling under Executions of his Wrath and Curse, as Fuel [illegible] for everlasting Burnings: And this will certainly be the dreadful End of *utter Apostates*, who, as much as in them lies, crucify the Son of God again, and put him to open Shame; and [illegible] is their Case, that they cannot possibly be recover'd to true Repentance. But O how safe and happy are those that are Partakers of special Grace! They are favoured with better Things, even Things that stand connected with, and shall certainly issue in eternal Salvation. For the faithful God will be ever mindful of his Covenant-Engagements, and of their Faith, and Labour of Love, which they manifest toward himself, in affectionately ministring to the Saints, for his Sake, in Obedience to his Command, and for the Glory of his Name, they are like good Ground, that brings forth excellent Fruit, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ; and are under a divine Blessing for Improvement unto eternal Life. And O what a sure and blessed Ground of Hope have they in the Promise and Oath of God, that his [illegible] Counsel of Wisdom and Love concerning them shall be accomplished! A solemn Oath is [illegible] justly deemed the strongest Testimony for confirming Depositions among Men; so the most high God has condescended to swear solemnly by himself, to satisfy the Heirs of Salvation about the Verity of his Promise, according to his eternal Counsel, which is unchangeably and irreversibly confirmed to them, in like Manner as it was to *Abraham*. They ought therefore to depend firmly upon it for their abundant Consolation; and this should engage their utmost Care and

 Diligence,

Diligence, in the Use of all the Means of Grace, and in an Exercise of Faith and Love with Perseverance therein, that they may attain a full Assurance of Hope, and *that* to the End of their Days, as Followers of them who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promises. And O how safe and solid is the Hope, that has Christ, and a promising God in him, for its Object, and flies for Refuge to him! This is as an Anchor of the Soul both sure and stedfast, and enters into Heaven itself, after our exalted Head and Saviour, who is gone thither, as an incomparably glorious Fore-runner, and as our great High Priest, after the Order of *Melchisedec*, who ever lives to make Intercession for us.

CHAP. VII.

The Apostle returns from his Digression to the Comparison he had proposed to make between the Priesthood of Melchisedec *and of Christ, in which he gives an Account of* Melchisedec, 1—3. *Shews the Excellency of* his *above the* Levitical *Priesthood*, 4—10. *Applies all this to Christ, to set forth the superior Dignity and Perfection of his Priesthood, even to the superceding and disannulling of that, which was after the Order of* Aaron *under the Law*, 11—24. *And draws an Inference from this, to the Encouragement of the Faith and Hope of the Church*, 25—28.

TEXT.

1 FOR *this Melchisedec King of Salem, Priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the Slaughter of the Kings, and blessed him;*

2 *To whom also Abraham gave a tenth*

PARAPHRASE.

1. TO proceed then to show the Excellency of Christ's Priesthood, It bears the most eminent Correspondence to that of *Melchisedec*, which vastly exceeded that of *Aaron:* For this famous *Melchisedec*, after whose Order Christ is an High Priest, as has been mentioned once and again, (*Chap.* v. 10, See the Note there, and vi. 20) and of whom our Lord is the great Antitype, both in his kingly and priestly Office: This *Melchisedec* was a certain renowned King of *Jerusalem*, anciently called *Salem*; (Pf. lxxvi. 2) and that he might be the fitter Type of Christ, he was also an eminent Priest; peculiarly appointed and constituted, as such, by the only living and true God to minister before him, who is far exalted above all Gods: (*Pf.* xcvii. 9.) And he was so great a Man in his Person and Office, that when the Patriarch *Abraham* returned from his Conquest and Slaughter of the four Kings of the Nations round about him, *Melchisedec* met and entertained him with Bread and Wine; and, in the Execution of his priestly Office, authoritatively pronounced a Blessing upon him; (*Gen.* xiv. 18—20) and so he was a High Priest, prior and superior to *Aaron*, not of one Nation only, as *Aaron* was; but of all Nations of the Earth, before *Israel* were separated, as a peculiar People to the Lord; and he therein was the more exact and complete Type of Christ, who is the High Priest of *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*. (1 John ii. 1, 2.)

2. To this *Melchisedec* also *Abraham*, in Acknowledgment of his superior Character of Priesthood, paid Tithes, which

Part of all; first being by Interpretation King of Righteousness, and after that also, King of Salem, which is, King of Peace;

which were the tenth Part of all the Spoils that he had taken in the War. (*Gen.* xiv. 20.)—As to his *Titles*, in which he was a remarkable Type of Christ, He was, according to the Signification of his Name, *King of Righteousness*, being a just and holy Man in himself, and in the Administration of his Government; and then (ἔπειτα δὲ καὶ) he was also, by a Denomination taken from *Salem*, the Place where he was King, stiled, according to the Meaning of that Word, *King of Peace*, which was the Effect of his righteous Government; and so he was a proper and lively Type of Christ, who is anointed of God to his *kingly*, as well as *priestly* Office; is sinless, holy and righteous in his own Person; (*ver.* 26) loves Righteousness and hates Iniquity; and the Sceptre of whose Kingdom *is a right Sceptre*; (Ps. xlv. 6, 7) who is also the *Lord our Righteousness*, by whose Obedience *many are made righteous*: (Jer. xxiii. 6, and Rom. v. 19.) And, as the Fruit of this, he is the *Prince of Peace*; (If. ix. 6) he having made Peace with God, and reconciled us to him by the Blood of his Cross, (*Ephes.* ii. 14—16) and thereupon preached Peace; and he is the Author of all the Blessings of spiritual Peace and Prosperity, and of an affectionate and holy Harmony among his Subjects between themselves, in the Administration of his Kingdom, as well as of Peace of Conscience and Joy in the Holy Ghost in their own Souls.

3 *Without Father, without Mother, without Descent, having neither Beginning of Days, nor End of Life, but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a Priest continually.*

3. As to *Melchisedec*'s *Original*, 'Tis purposely concealed in the Scripture-History of him, which gives no Account of his Father or Mother; nor do we find any Genealogy of his Priesthood, as we do of *Aaron* and his Family, or of the *Levitical* Priests, whose Father was *Aaron*, and whose Mother, in their several Generations, was to be an *Israelite*: (Lev. viii. 2, and xxi. 14.) He did not, like them, descend from *Aaron*, or derive his Pedigree from any Family of Priesthood whatsoever, there having been none of that Office among any Predecessors in his House; nor indeed is there the least Account of any Ancestors that he had; nor have we any Record either of his Birth or Death, or of the Beginning or End of his Priesthood; but he is mentioned without any Notice taken of either of these, as tho' he had never *began to be* in any Date of Time, and had never *expired* and come to an End of his Life, or Priesthood: But † he is represented in this peculiar Manner, with regard to all these Particulars, that he might be a more eminent Figure, and bear the highest Resemblance possible of the eternal Son of God, who in his *human Nature* had no earthly Father; nor was, any more than *Mel-*

† *Abides a Priest continually* seems to refer, not to *Melchisedec*, but to the nearest Antecedent, *the Son of God*; and so may be render'd, by adding a small, but very common *Ellipsis* of *the Article* (ὁ,) *who abides* a Priest continually, or unto Perpetuity. (See Mr. *Peirce* on the Place.)

chisedec, of the Tribe of *Levi*; and in his *divine Nature* had no Mother, nor any human Parentage at all; but was from Everlasting to Everlasting God; and his Designation to *Office*, by Covenant-Constitution, was before all Worlds: And as he is *the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever*; (Chap. xiii. 8) so he continues everlastingly, singly and alone, without any Predecessor or Successor, as well as without any Partner in his Priestly Office, in which he *ever lives to make Intercession for them, that come unto God by him.* (ver. 25.)

4 Now consider how great this Man was, unto whom even the Patriarch Abraham gave the Tenth of the Spoils.

4. Now, in order to your having the more exalted Thoughts of the Excellency and Dignity of Christ's Priesthood, and being convinced of the Danger of adhering to that of the *Levitical* Tribe, I desire that ye would carefully observe, and attentively reflect upon the foregoing Account of *Melchisedec*, that ye may see how uncommonly great a Man he was, in his Office and Favour with God, in which he prefigured Christ, according to the magnificent Description that has but now been given of him, to whom *Abraham* himself, that noble Progenitor, not only of one, but of all the Tribes of *Israel*; even he, great as he was, and in whom ye yourselves glory above all others, (*John* viii. 39, 53) made a religious Offering, as to *his Superior*, under the Character of the Priest of the most high God, even an Offering of the tenth Part of all the Spoils, that he had made of the Riches of those Kings, and of their Armies, which he had vanquished in War. (*ver.* 1.) He therefore must be greater, by the Ordination of God, than *Abraham* himself,* and much more must Christ be so, whose Type only *Melchisedec* was.

5 And verily they that are of the Sons of Levi, who receive the Office of the Priesthood, have a Commandment to take Tithes of the People according to the Law, that is, of their Brethren, tho' they come out of the Loins of Abraham:

5. And truly, to show how the Dignity of the Priesthood appears in the Business of *Tithing*, the Descendents of *Aaron* among the Sons of *Levi*, who were invested with the Office of Priesthood under the Law, had a particular Warrant to claim and receive Tithes, which the Lord had appropriated to himself, (*Lev.* xxvii. 30, 31) from all the People of *Israel*, according to the Settlement that was made of those Dues in the Law of *Moses*, as to the Matter and Manner of them; (*Numb.* xviii. 21, 26) and these they received from the rest of the Tribes, even of their Brethren according to the Flesh, though *they*, as well as themselves, were Descendents from the Loins of *Abraham*, and, as such, had originally an equal Right to all the Privileges that pertained to them, as his Offspring; and so the very Law of

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* Barely *giving* don't make the Receiver *greater* than the Giver; for our Lord said, *'Tis more blessed to give than to receive*, (Acts xx. 35) which intimates that, in the Way of *Charity*, the *Giver* is the greatest; and therefore the Argument for *Melchisedec*'s being greater than *Abraham* rises from *Abraham*'s giving or delivering the Tenth to *Melchisedec* under the Character of the *Priest of the most high God*, in Acknowledgment of him as such.

Tithes ſhows that ſuperior Honour belongs to him who receives them, above him that pays them.

6 But he whoſe Deſcent is not counted from them, received Tithes of Abraham, and bleſſed him that had the Promiſes.

6. But *Melchiſedec*, whoſe Genealogy is unwritten and unknown, cannot be reckoned a Deſcendent from the *Levitical* Prieſts, he having exiſted long before any of that Tribe were in Being. This extraordinary Man was ſo much greater than they, that he had the Honour of receiving Tithes of their eminent Patriarch *Abraham* himſelf, as has been obſerved; *(ver.* 2, 4) and, more than this, he as a Prieſt authoritatively pronounced a Bleſſing, in the Name of *the Moſt High God*, upon that Father of the Faithful, with whom God made the Covenant of Promiſes, and confirmed it with an Oath, *(Chap.* vi. 13—16) as it related to him and his Poſterity, who claim and hold all their Privileges and Bleſſings under him, as their Repreſentative therein.

7 And without all Contradiction, the leſs is bleſſed of the better.

7. And from this Conſideration itſelf it appears, that there is no Manner of Cauſe to diſpute or doubt, either upon the common Principles of Reaſon, or of Revelation, but that *Melchiſedec* was a more excellent Perſon in his Office than *Abraham*; becauſe an authoritative Benediction, as from God and in his Name, is not delivered by a leſſer to a greater, but by a greater to a leſſer Perſon in the Office, by virtue of which he bleſſes him. Chriſt the Antitype therefore muſt needs be a much greater High Prieſt ſtill, as he, in the Right of his own Purchaſe, effectually bleſſes his People with all ſpiritual Bleſſings.

8 And here Men that die receive Tithes; but there he receiveth them, *of whom it is witneſſed that he liveth.*

8. And there is this further Proof of *Melchiſedec*'s Superiority to all the Sons of *Levi*, (ver. 5) that here, in their Caſe, by the Conſtitution of the Law of *Moſes*, they which received Tithes are, like the reſt of the whole human Race, mortal Men, whoſe Birth and Death in their ſeveral Generations we are well acquainted with by the ſacred Writings: But, in the other Caſe of *Melchiſedec*, he received Tithes, who is not ſpoken of in the Scripture under the Character of a mortal Man, or of one that died for any other to ſucceed him in his Office; but is repreſented only as *living*, as if he had no Beginning of Days or End of Life, as to his Perſon or Prieſthood; *(ver.* 3) and ſo the Record ſtands of him as if he lived for ever; the Deſign of which was, that he might be the more eminent Type of Chriſt, who in his divine Nature really has from Everlaſting to Everlaſting an immortal Life, and who, tho' in his human Nature he once died, is now alive, and never died out of his Office, but lives in his Prieſthood for ever after the Order of *Melchiſedec*. (Chap. v. 6.)

9 And as I may ſo ſay, Levi alſo who receiveth Tithes, payed Tithes in Abraham.

9. And to add one Thought more, to ſum up the Argument relating to the Superiority of *Melchiſedec* to all the *Levitical* Prieſts, I may ſay that in a certain Senſe, as by juſt Conſtruction, the whole Tribe of *Levi* alſo, who by the Law received Tithes, did themſelves virtually pay Tithes

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to him, in and through *Abraham*, as their common Father, Representative and Covenant-Head.

10 *For he was yet in the Loins of his Father when Melchisedec met him.*

10. For *Levi* and all his Descendents were comprehended in their natural and Covenant Father *Abraham*; they having been included in him, not only as an Effect in its Cause, and Offspring in their Parents, but also as a People are in their Representatives *, which *Abraham* was to all *Israel* in the Covenant of Promises, made with him for himself and them, before *Melchisedec* met him, and received Tithes from him, and blessed him; (*Gen.* xvi. 1—3) and so he was undoubtedly greater in his Office than any *Levite* whatsoever.

11 *If therefore Perfection were by the Levitical Priesthood (for under it the People received the Law) what further Need* was there *that another Priest should rise after the Order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the Order of Aaron?*

11. To apply all this therefore to the main Argument in Hand, relating to our Lord Jesus Christ, the great *High Priest over the House of God*, (Chap. x. 21) If there were an Accomplishment of the good Things themselves, that were signified by the Ordinances of the *Levitical* Priesthood; or if Perfection were really and effectually to be obtained, in point of Atonement to satisfy divine Justice, and cleanse the Conscience from Guilt, (*Chap.* ix. 9) and to give us Acceptance with God to eternal Life, together with an humble Confidence in him, and holy Liberty and Boldness of Access to him, and Hope of future Glory; and if the perfect State of the Church, as to its Institutions of spiritual Worship, were to be acquired by the Offerings, Sacrifices and Services, that belong'd to the Priesthood, which the Sons of *Levi* were concerned in according to the Law; (for it was together with, and in relation to that Priesthood, that the Church of *Israel* received the ceremonial Law, † by the Ministry of *Moses*, and were obliged to observe it, which ascertained all the Privileges and Blessings, that were to accrue to them from it) If, I say, Perfection, with regard to these Things, were attainable by the Levitical Priesthood itself, or by the whole Sy-

* It seems to me that *Levi*'s, or, as it is to be understood, that his and his Sons paying Tithes in, or by *Abraham*, (δια Αβρααμ) is to be considered with relation to their being in *Abraham*'s Loins, not merely as their natural, but as their *Covenant-Father*, who had received the Promises for them, as well as for himself; otherwise I am at a Loss to see, for what Purpose *Abraham*'s *having the Promises* is mentioned in this Argument, *ver.* 6, which may be naturally supposed to be referred to here: And this may help to illustrate the Doctrines of the Imputation of *Adam*'s Sin and Christ's Righteousness. As all Mankind were in *Adam*, as their natural Father and federal Head, when he sinned, so they virtually sinned in him: And as all Christ's spiritual Seed were in him as their public Representative and federal Head, when he died for their Sins, and rose again for their Justification, so they virtually died and rose in him. (See *Ephes.* ii. 6.) Accordingly, as *Adam*'s Sin actually takes Place upon all his Offspring, when they come to derive their natural Being from him; so Christ's Righteousness actually takes Place upon all his spiritual Seed, when they come to derive spiritual Life from him, by virtue of their vital Union, through Faith, to him.

† This, as some may think, seems to intimate that the *Levitical* Priesthood was set up *before* the giving of the Law, whereas the Law was given at Mount *Sinai* before the Institution of that Priesthood. But though the *moral* Law was delivered, *Ex.* xx, before the Institution of the *Levitical* Priesthood; yet *Israel*'s acceptable Performance of the Obedience it required under that Dispensation, depended upon that Priesthood; and the *ceremonial* Law, which contained all the Services, Sacrifices and Ordinances of Worship, pertaining to that Priesthood, was given *after* the Institution of the Priesthood itself. *Lev.* i. 1—8.

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ſtem of the Law which it belonged to, What Neceſſity, or further Occaſion could there be, that another Sort of Prieſt, of a different and higher Rank and Order, ſhould be ſet up and exalted to the Dignity of that Office, as it has been ſhown (*Chap.* v. 5, 6.) Chriſt was to be after the Order of *Melchiſedec?* And why ſhould he not be denominated, as he is not in any Place of Scripture, a Prieſt according to the common Courſe of the Levitical Prieſthood, which was to be after the Order of *Aaron?* There certainly could be no Need of this new and higher Sort of Prieſthood; but it muſt be intirely uſeleſs, upon a Suppoſition that all the Ends of a Prieſthood, and of the Law to which it belonged, could be perfectly anſwered by that Prieſthood itſelf. It is therefore plain from this ſingle Conſideration, that both *that* Prieſthood and the Law, which were inſeparably interwoven, were to be aboliſhed, as they now are, to make Way for a better Prieſthood, and evangelical Diſpenſation, in the Perſon of Chriſt.

12 For the Prieſthood being changed, there is made of Neceſſity a Change alſo of the Law.

12. For the Order of the Prieſthood being altered, ſo as to be transferred from that, which was appointed by, and ſtood connected with the Law of *Moſes*, to another of a different and more excellent Kind, there muſt of Neceſſity, in Conſequence of this, be a like Alteration made, as to the Law itſelf; ſo as to aboliſh *that*, (the whole Adminiſtration of which was confined to the *Aaronical* Prieſthood) and to introduce *another* evangelical Conſtitution that pertains to, and derives its Efficacy from, this more excellent Prieſthood of a ſuperior Order.

13 For he of whom theſe Things are ſpoken, pertaineth to another Tribe, of which no Man gave Attendance at the Altar.

13. And that Chriſt is not a Prieſt of *Aaron*'s Order, like thoſe under the Law, is evident; For he, who was pointed to in all the Things, that have hitherto been ſaid about *Melchiſedec* and his Prieſthood, was not of the Tribe of *Levi*, to which the legal Prieſthood was confined; but he ſprang from another Tribe of *Iſrael*, which had no Share in, but was, together with all the other Tribes, excluded from that Prieſthood; none of them, beſides that of *Levi*, having had any Right to officiate in the prieſtly Character, by offering the Sacrifices that were preſented on the Brazen Altar, or performing any Services relating to *that*,* or to the Altar of Incenſe.

* When King *Uzziah*, who was of the Tribe of *Judah*, went into the Temple, *to burn Incenſe on the Altar of Incenſe*, it is ſaid, that he *tranſgreſſed againſt the Lord his God*, and Azariah, *the Chief Prieſt, and four-ſcore Prieſts of the Lord withſtood him, ſaying, It pertains not unto thee,* Uzziah, *to burn Incenſe to the Lord, but to the Prieſts, the Sons of Aaron:* And God was ſo highly offended at the King's Attempt to break in upon his Inſtitution, that *Uzziah* was immediately ſtruck with a *Leproſy in his Forehead; and he was a Leper unto the Day of his Death.* (2 Chron. xxvi. 16—21.) God hereby teſtified in the ſevereſt Manner againſt ſuch, as under that Diſpenſation ſhould venture to exerciſe any Part of the prieſtly Function; and exemplarily puniſhed one of the Tribe of *Judah*, though a King, for it, the more remarkably to exclude *that Tribe* from any Pretenſions to it; and *this is the Tribe*, from which the Apoſtle obſerves in the next Verſe our Lord ſprung.

14 *For it is evident, that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which Tribe Moses spake nothing concerning Priesthood.*

14. For it is plain beyond all Controversy, as had been manifested beforehand (προδηλον) in an antient Prophecy of the *Messiah*, (Gen. xlix. 10.) and was acknowledged by the chief Priests and Scribes themselves, (*Mat.* ii. 4—6.) that *the Christ* was to arise from the Tribe of *Judah*; and it is certain from our Lord's *Genealogy*, (Luke iii. 23—38.) that he arose from that Tribe, and particularly from the Royal Family of *David*: But, concerning which Tribe, *Moses* in the Book of the Law never once mentioned, or intimated, that any one of them should exercise the priestly Function under that Dispensation; and his Silence about it is a sufficient Proof, (as Silence in all Cases of Institution is) that none of the Tribe of *Judah* ever had any Authority to assume that Office to themselves.

15 *And it is yet far more evident: For that after the Similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another Priest,*

15. And it is yet more abundantly plain, even to a Demonstration, * that the Priesthood, and consequently the Law that depended upon it, is so changed as to be abolished, according to what has been said; (*ver.* 12.) because, answerable to former Predictions, another Priest is now raised up, by the Ordination of God, after *the Likeness*, which is much the same with after *the Order*, of *Melchisedec*, in a Resemblance of his Priesthood, which has been shown to be of a different and more excellent Nature, than that of *Aaron*; (*ver.* 1—11.)

16 *Who is made, not after the Law of a carnal Commandment, but after the Power of an endless Life.*

16. Even a High Priest, who is constituted in his Office, not according to the Law of *Moses*, which settled the Levitical Priesthood, and consisted of Precepts, that may be called *carnal Commandments*, as they required the Sacrifices of Beasts, and consisted of such Rites as *sanctified* only *to the purifying of the Flesh*; (Chap. ix. 13.) and as the Priests themselves were consecrated to their Office by carnal Ceremonies, and were no more than weak, frail and dying Men, according to the Order of a fleshly Generation, and so needed a Succession of them to perform its Functions from Age to Age; and as all this was enjoin'd by a System of Laws contained in *carnal Ordinances*, which were *imposed on* the Israelites *until the Time of Reformation*, (Chap. ix. 10.) that was to be made under the more spiritual and holy Dispensation of the Gospel, relating to the Worship, Privileges and Blessings of the Church: But, in Opposition to the Nature of that Priesthood, Christ was made a High Priest by a more excellent and ever abiding Constitution, in which he was consecrated to that Office, according to the Ability which he has to execute it, by Virtue of that immortal Life, which he has in himself, as the eternal Son of God, and by Virtue of

* I take this and the two next Verses to be brought in as a second Proof of what was asserted, *ver.* 12, about the *Change of the Priesthood and of the Law*. The Proof given of this in *ver.* 13, 14. was taken from Christ's being not of the Tribe of *Levi*, but of *Judah*; and the *yet far more evident* Proof of that Point here, and in the two following Verses, is taken from the intirely *different Nature* of the legal Priesthood, and the Priesthood of Christ.

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his re-assumed human Life in Heaven, according to which he lives for ever to discharge his glorious Priesthood in his own Person, and to give eternal Life to all those, for whom he acts as a Priest, without any Partner with him, or Successor to him therein: And so his Priesthood must be incomparably more excellent, perfect, efficacious and durable, than any that preceded it under the Law. *

17 *For he testifieth, Thou* art *a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedec.*

17. For, as has been observed again and again, (*Chap.* v. 6, 10. See the Note there, and vi. 20.) God the Father declared, in a Way of divine Testimony to him by the Mouth of *David*, even while the Levitical Priesthood was in its full Glory, *Thou art a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedec*, (Pf. cx. 4.) that is, Thou art peculiarly and eminently a Priest, not after the Similitude of *Aaron*'s lower, but of *Melchisedec*'s higher Priesthood; (*ver.* 15.) not for any limited Dispensation that shall give Way to a better, nor in a Succession of one Priest after another; but immutably in thine own Person, till all the Ends of thy acting in that Character shall be perfected; and thenceforth to all Eternity, in the Honours that belong to thee for having completely executed that Office, and in its glorious Effects to the eternal Salvation of the whole Church.

18 *For there is verily a disannulling of the Commandment going before, for the Weakness and Unprofitableness thereof.*

18. For in this new and everlasting Priesthood of Christ after the Order of *Melchisedec*, there is, in reality, an Abrogation of the whole System of the *Mosaiac* Law and of all its Institutions, which depended upon the Levitical Priesthood, and preceded the Introduction of the Gospel-State, which is built upon the Priesthood of Christ. This, I say, is now certainly abolished and set aside, by Reason of its Insufficiency, Unavailableness and Impossibility to purge the Conscience from Guilt, and justify a Sinner to eternal Life: As the *moral* Law could not do this, *in that it was weak through the Flesh*; (Rom. viii. 3. See the Note there) so neither could the *ceremonial* Law, in that it was only a Type or *Shadow of good Things to come, and not the very Image*, much less the Substance *of them*; and *could not* by any of *its Sacrifices take away Sin*. (Chap. x. 1—4.)

19 *For the Law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better Hope* did; *by the which we draw nigh unto God.*

19. For the *Mosaiac* Law was of itself incapable of perfecting its Worshippers in any Thing that pertains to the Conscience, and to Reconciliation with God: It was only designed to prefigure and prepare the Way for, and point to, what should be effectual for these Purposes, as it was our *Schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified*

* Tho' Christ died in his human Nature, *that* was because he was a *Sacrifice*, as well as a Priest; and his offering up himself as a Sacrifice was an Act of his Priesthood; and so he officiated as a Priest in his very dying; and consequently did not die out of his Office for others to succeed him, as the Levitical Priests did, since his Priesthood suffered no Interruption by his dying; and as in his divine Nature it was impossible that he should die; so, according to its powerful Life, he continued immortal in his sacerdotal Office; and he re-assumed his human Life, that he might fulfil the Remainder of his Priesthood in ever living to make Intercession for them, that come unto God by him, *ver.* 25.

by Faith in him. (Gal. iii. 24.) But the Introduction of the Gospel-State, and of Christ this better high Priest, and of his truly expiatory Sacrifice, who in the Discharge of his priestly Office is the Object of our Hope, gives us a better Ground of Confidence, and a surer Hope toward God, than the Law ever could; and has perfected all that was deficient in the Law itself, and prefigured by it: Under these Considerations, *we have Boldness and Access with Confidence by the Faith of Christ*, (Ephes. iii. 12.) and so, as *a holy Priesthood*, may *offer up spiritual Sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*; (1 Pet. ii. 5.) Yea, we have a better, nearer and more advantageous Approach to God, through Christ by Faith, in Gospel-Worship, than even the *Aaronical* Priests themselves had with their Sacrifices and Offerings, when they went into the Holy of Holies; and we are not debarr'd this Liberty, as the People then were, who were kept at a Distance; but, *through Jesus Christ*, every true Believer *has Access by one Spirit to the Father*. (Ephes. ii. 18.)

20 *And inasmuch as not without an Oath* he was made Priest:

20. And we may well be assured of this, for as much as he was constituted in his Office, not as the Priests of old were in a common Way, but by a solemn Oath of God himself, to signify the Excellency, Immutability and Perpetuity of his Priesthood, as what should never fail.

21 (*For those Priests were made without an Oath; but this with an Oath, by him that said unto him, The Lord sware, and will not repent, Thou* art *a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedec)*

21. For all the former Priests under the Law were constituted in their Office, without the Solemnity of Ratification by an Oath; nothing of that Kind being ever hinted in their Consecration to it, which left their Office in a repealable State, when ever God should please: But this great and glorious High Priest, even *Jesus*, whom we are speaking of, (*ver.* 22.) was constituted in his Office with all the irrevocable Solemnity of an Oath by God his Father, who said unto him in the Place so often referred to already, (*Ps.* cx. 4.) The Lord hath sworn by himself, and will never retract or reverse it, Thou art in thine own Person, without any Successor, an everlasting and unchangeable high Priest, after the Similitude of *Melchisedec*, even unto the Consummation of all Things. (See the Note on *Chap.* v. 10.)

22 *By so much was Jesus made a Surety of a better Testament.*

22. In Proportion then to the superior Excellence of *this* to the *Aaronical* Priesthood, as to the Nature of the Office and the Manner of Establishment in it, Jesus, the once crucified, but now exalted Saviour, was constituted by God the Father's own Appointment and Investiture, * an Undertaker,

* A *Surety* or *Sponsor* (ἔγγυος) is one that draws nigh, undertakes or promises, and is bound for another, either to do or pay that for him, which he cannot, or will not do or pay for himself: 'Tis one who engages for another, that the Obligations which he is under shall be one Way or other answered. Such a Surety is Christ, not *for God* to his People, as some would have it; for God needs no Surety for him to secure the Performance of his Promises to us; nor do *we need* any one from him, merely for the Confirmation of our Faith in them, since his own unchangeable Veracity, as manifested in his Word and Oath, are an absolute Security, and the highest Evidence of it, and of his performing them,

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taker, Promiser and Sponsor, in a Way of Suretyship to him for us, to ratify the new Covenant by his Death, and to take effectual Care that all the Requirements be answer'd, that were necessary to secure the Accomplishment of its Promises; which is a better Covenant,* than that made with *Israel* at Mount *Sinai*, as it has a better Surety, than any of the high Priests of old could be; and as its Administration is with greater Light and Simplicity, and with wider Extent to the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, and is *established upon better Promises*; (Chap. viii. 6.) which also may be considered as a *Testamentary Covenant*, † in one View of it, as it was finally

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as had been declared, *Chap.* vi. 13—19: And in the Nature of Things, a Surety ought to be a Person of more Credit and Ability, than he is, for whom he engages, or at least ought to be one, that is provided to secure against some Defect or Failure of Fidelity or Capacity, that possibly may be found in him, for whom he is a Surety; neither of which can be said of *God*, without Blasphemy: And if Christ were only in a *lax Sense* a Surety, in a Way of *Witness* for God; this is by no Means a proper Suretyship; nor is it any Thing different in its Nature and Kind from what was done by the Prophets, Evangelists and Apostles, in the Testimony they have given under divine Inspiration to him.

But *Christ is a Surety for us to God:* We needed that he should be so, as we are sinful Creatures, and insolvent of what is required by the Law, as a Covenant of Works, which was broke for want of a Surety to engage for our keeping it; and without a Surety, the new Covenant would be in Danger of being broken on our Part, as that with *Adam* was. And as the Apostle's Discourse in this Context is professedly all along about *the Priesthood* of Christ, his being a *Surety* relates to the Execution of his *Priestly Office*, which, like that of the Priests under the Law, was *for the People* to God, and *not for God* to the People: And though the Covenant of Grace, considered as a *Testament*, was confirmed by *the Death* of Christ, (*Chap.* ix. 15—17. See the Note there) and all its Blessings were purchased by it; and though the Covenant was made with a Reference to his Death, as the procuring Cause of all its Benefits, in the Virtue of which they should be brought home and applied to us, through Faith in him; yet his Death did not procure the Covenant itself, which was made long before with *a Proviso* of the Death of Christ, as *the grand Condition* of its taking Effect: But the Covenant itself is merely the Effect of the infinite Wisdom and Grace of God in the eternal Councils of his Will; and its Dispensation to us is founded upon the Covenant-Transactions before all Worlds between the Father and Son, about the Manner and Means of accomplishing its great Design, as might be most honourable to all God's Perfections in bringing many Sons to Glory. Accordingly, Christ as *the Surety* of the Covenant undertook to satisfy divine Justice for all their Transgressions, to redeem them from the Curse of the Law and deserved Wrath and Misery, Slavery and Ruin, and to purchase for them all the Blessings of Grace and Glory; (*Chap.* ix. 15.) and he further engaged to furnish them with all those Supplies of his Spirit and Grace, through the Merit of his Blood, as should be necessary to renew and sanctify them, and bring them to Faith and Repentance, and enable them to fulfil the Duties of the Covenant, that should be incumbent upon them, to prevent their violating its sacred Bonds, and defeating their Interest in it, by wilful Disobedience and utter Apostacy, through the Power of indwelling Corruptions, and surrounding Temptations, by which they would certainly miscarry, were they left to themselves.

* *Christ's being the Surety of a better Covenant* seems to suppose that the Covenant made with *Israel* had a Surety, which may refer, not to *Moses* personally, but to the *High Priest*, as such, who in the Execution of his Office was a Sort of typical *Mediator* and *Surety* on Behalf of the People to God, by Means of a typical Expiation, which he made on the great Day of Atonement. (See Dr. *Owen* on the Place.)

† The *Greek* Word rendered *Covenant*, (διαθηκη a διατιθημι *dispono*) and the *Hebrew* Word, which answers it, (ברית a ברא *creavit*) signifies any *Disposition, Constitution, Settlement*, or *Establishment* of Things; and so is applicable to either of these Senses, wherever it is found in the Old or New Testament; and what Sort of *Constitution* or *Establishment* is meant by it, in every Place, is to be gathered from the Context, and the Nature of the Things there spoken of, whether it be a Constitution *by a Law*, or *mutual Compact*, or a *free Promise*, or a *Testament*: It is mostly translated *Covenant* in this Epistle, as well as in other Places, and it may very well be so; unless when there is a particular Reference to the Nature and Use of a *Testament* among Men, in which View it seems to be represented, *Chap.* ix. 15—17, with Reference to the Death of a Testator to put it in Force. But which Way soever it be render'd, it signifies a *Constitution, Settlement*, or *Establishment* of one Kind or other; and when it is used to express *the Covenant of Grace*, which is a Covenant of *free Promises*, it may be considered as containing the Nature

finally put in Force by the Death of Christ, who, as *a Testator*, bequeathed all its Blessings to the Heirs of Promise. (*Chap.* ix. 15—17.)

23 *And they truly were many Priests, because they were not suffered to continue by Reason of Death:*

23. And indeed, further to show the Weakness and Unprofitableness of the legal Dispensation, (*ver.* 18.) it is well known, that though the *High Priest's Office itself* were but *one*; and though but *one at a Time* could execute it, yet there was a Succession of *many* of them, that officiated in it from Generation to Generation; because they being merely mortal Men, were not permitted, by reason of Death, to live in the perpetual Exercise of their Office; nor was it possible that they should, since they all died like other Men, and then their priestly Function, as vested in their own Persons respectively, died with them, and they could never reassume it again, or continue to carry it on in another World; which shows that there was an Imperfection and Mutability in that State of the Church.

24 *But this* Man, *because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable Priesthood.*

24. But, on the contrary, to assure us of the greater Excellence and Unchangeableness of the Gospel-Dispensation, this glorious Person Jesus Christ, who was typified by *Melchisedec*, and was truly a Man, but was God as well as Man, that he might be a fit Mediator between God and Men, and a proper Surety to God for Men; This divine Man, of whom we are speaking, because he could not die out of his Office, as merely mortal Men did under the Law, abides everlastingly in the Execution of it, without any Interruption by Death, (See the Note on *ver.* 16.) and so in his own single Person has an immutable and never-failing Priesthood, which cannot pass away from him to another; but which he continues to carry on at his Father's right Hand in Heaven, by appearing before him, as a Lamb that had been slain, (*Rev.* v. 6.) and as a Priest upon his Throne. (*Zech.* vi. 13.)

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of a *Testamentary Covenant*, which depends intirely upon the good Will and Pleasure of the Donor, as to the Blessings bestowed, and the Persons that shall have them; and as to the Time, Way, Terms and Means, in which the Bestowment of them shall take Effect through the Death of Christ, rather than as containing the Nature of a *proper, strict and formal Covenant*, which, in our usual Acceptation of the Word, is an Agreement between two or more Parties about Things, that are, or may be in their own Power to perform; which can never be reconciled to the Scripture-Representation of *the Covenant of Grace*, as made between God and sinful Men: And, perhaps, this may be one Reason, why this Covenant is commonly express'd by a Word, which, of all other Constitutions, primarily signifies *a Testament*; and I see no Inconsistency in supposing, that the Substance of the same gracious Settlement, or Disposition of spiritual Blessings, may be called both a *Covenant* and a *Testament*, only with this Difference, that when 'tis called a *Covenant*, it leads our Thoughts to *God in Christ*, as *the Maker* of it; but when 'tis called a *Testament*, it carries an Idea of its being *made by Christ*: And so if we consider it as a *Covenant* of Promises, which God made with his People in Christ, it was ratified by *his Blood*, under the Notion of a *Mediator*, or *Surety*; but if we consider it as a *Testament*, which Christ made, correspondent to God's Covenant, it was ratified by *his Death*, under the Notion of a *Testator*, that has bequeathed Legacies to the Heirs of Salvation, and has made a Declaration of his Will with Relation thereunto: And therefore, though considering it under the formal Notion of a *Testament* made by Christ, it needed no Mediator or Surety; yet considering it under the formal Notion of a *Covenant*, which God made with his People in and through Christ, it both needed and had a *Mediator*, as he is called, *Chap.* viii. 6, or a *Surety*, as we have it in this Place. (See the Note on *Chap.* ix. 15.)

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25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make Intercession for them.

25. It may therefore be solidly concluded from this, and from all that has been said before concerning Christ, as our great High Priest, that he has not only all divine Ability originally in himself; but, in Opposition to the Weakness of the *Aaronical* Priesthood, He has likewise all *Office-Power* * and Authority, which includes his *Willingness*, to give compleat Deliverance from all Sin and Misery, Fears and Dangers, and to advance to all the Glory and Blessedness of the heavenly State, in the Face of all Opposition and Difficulty, to the utmost Extent of his Office-Power and Merit; to the utmost of the Wants, Desires, Hopes and Capacities for Happiness; and to the utmost Period of Time, yea, even to the eternal Salvation of all, that under a Sense of their Wants make their Approaches to God in Prayer, and other Parts of Gospel-Worship, through him, for all seasonable Relief on his Account, as the only Mediator, with Faith in his Name; since he lives for ever in Heaven, not only as a divine Person, and as clothed with human Nature; but also as their great High Priest and Advocate, (who has a prevailing Interest with God the Father) to make continual Intercession for them; which he does in the Presentation of his Person, and of the Merit of his Sacrifice, and in a Plea of Right, (*John* xvii. 24.) that all Blessings may be given to them, according to the Purchase of his Blood, which he shed for the Remission of their Sins, and obtaining eternal Redemption for them.

26 For such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from Sinners, and made higher than the Heavens;

26. For such an excellent, able, ever-living and perfect High Priest was fit and necessary for us; and it became the infinite Wisdom and Holiness of God to provide such an one for us, (*Chap.* ii. 10.) who is not himself a Sinner, as we are, and as all the High Priests under the Law were; but is unspottedly pure in his Nature, Thoughts, Words and Deeds; (*Luke* i. 35, and *Acts* ii. 27, and 1 *Peter* ii. 22.) inoffensive, (ακακος) innocent and blameless, no Way injurious to any, and now raised above the Reach of being hurt by any; never tainted with the least Pollution in Heart or Life, nor defiled by Means of other Persons or Things (as the legal Priests often were) to interrupt him in the Performance of his sacerdotal Office, yea, was free from original Sin, as having been born, not in a natural, or federal Way of Union with *Adam*, like the rest of Mankind; and he was removed to the furthest Distance from all Communion

* Christ's being *able to save* relates, not to his *absolute Power* as *God*, who, as such, is able to do all Things, that don't imply a Contradiction to the Nature of Things themselves, or to the Perfections of his own Nature: For though this divine Power is fundamental to the Ability here ascribed to him; yet 'tis his *Office-Power*, as *God-Man Mediator*, that is here intended, as appears from his *unchangeable Priesthood* mentioned in the preceding Verse, from whence his Ability is inferred in this Verse; for thus the Connection stands, *Because he continues ever, he has an unchangeable Priesthood; therefore he is able to save to the uttermost*, &c. And this farther appears from the Proof that is given of his Ability for this Purpose, in the Close of the Verse, which is, *Seeing he ever lives to make Intercession for them.*

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with Sinners in any of their evil Principles, Ways or Works; and * far excels all the Angels in Holiness, as well as is now, in his exalted State, advanced to the highest Authority and Glory above them in the Heaven of Heavens, far beyond all other Heavens. (*Ephes.* iv. 10.)

27 *Who needeth not daily, as those high Priests to offer up Sacrifice, first for his own Sins, and then for the Peoples. For this he did once, when he offered up himself.*

27. From hence it plainly appears that, being absolutely sinless, he had no Occasion, as the High Priests had under the Law, to offer, on every great Day of Atonement, † expiatory Sacrifices, first for personal Sins of his own, as they did for theirs, (See *Levit.* 16.) and then for the Sins of his People, as they did for the Sins of *Israel*; but, with regard to the *Sins of his People,* he did this, and finished it all *at once*, by Way of complete Atonement for them, when, *thro' the eternal Spirit, he offered himself without Spot to God*, (Chap. ix. 14.) in Opposition to the *frequent* Offerings of Sacrifices for the Peoples Sins under the Law, and in Opposition to those Priests that had nothing of *their own*, and nothing better than *Beasts and Birds* to offer.

28 *For the Law maketh Men High Priests, which have Infirmity; but the Word of the Oath which was since the Law,* maketh *the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.*

28. For *the Law of a carnal Commandment*, (ver. 16.) by its Constitution and Appointment, ordered such to be consecrated to the High Priest's Office, as are merely mortal Men, weak and dying Creatures, and no better; (*ver.* 23.) yea, as are attended with *sinful*, as well as natural Infirmities, like other Men; and so needed to offer for their own Sins: (*ver.* 27.) But the Word, which God spoke, and solemnly confirm'd with his Oath, and delivered in the sacred Writings (*Ps.* cx. 4.) many hundreds of Years after the Law was given by *Moses*; This Word invests the eternal Son of God himself with his priestly Office, who is consecrated to it and perfected in it, (τετελειωμένον) as one, that never had any moral Defect to be a Blemish upon his Priesthood or Sacrifice, or to require an Offering for himself; and who is now in his exalted State intirely free, even from all the natural Infirmities of Mankind, which he was attended with in this World, that he might be capable of dying as a Sacrifice; and so he is every Way fit to discharge the Remainder of his Priesthood for Perpetuity in his own Person, as our great and only Intercessor, without Alteration or End, 'till the whole Design of it shall be perfectly accomplished, to the eternal Salvation of the Church, and of every individual Member of it.

* *The Heavens*, by a common Metonymy, is put for its *Inhabitants*, (See 1 *Chron.* xvi. 30, 31. *Ps.* xcvi. 11. and *Isa.* xlix. 13.)

† *Daily*, (καθ' ἡμέραν) relates, I think, not to the *daily Offerings* of the common Priests, but to the *annual* Offerings of the High Priest, at every Return of the great Day of Atonement; for it is the Office of *the High Priest* that is here spoken of; and it was only on the Anniversary Day of Atonement, from Time to Time, that they offered Sacrifices for themselves and for the People.

RECOL-

Recollections.

How transcendently excellent is the Priesthood of Christ, as 'tis after the Order of *Melchisedec*, and confirmed for ever by the Oath of God himself! And of what vast Importance is it, that our Faith be established herein! The Apostle thought it so, or else he would never have taken such abundant Pains to illustrate and confirm it. *Melchisedec*, as an extraordinary Priest of the most high God, blessed *Abraham*, who with *Levi*, as naturally and federally included in his Loins, paid Tithes to this superior Priest. But how much more eminent a Priest, as well as King of Righteousness and Peace, is the Son of God, than *Melchisedec*! He was only in Type what Christ is in Reality, without Beginning of Days or End of Life; without any earthly Father according to the Flesh, and without any Mother according to his divine Nature; and an eternal High Priest of such perpetual Power and complete Acceptance with his heavenly Father, according to the Energy of his immortal Life, as supercedes the Want of any other to make Atonement, either for believing *Jews*, or *Gentiles* And how different from, and incomparably more excellent is his Priesthood than that, which was appointed by the Law of a carnal Commandment! He sprung, not from the Tribe of *Levi*, but of *Judah*, which never had, by divine Institution, any Share in the High Priest's Office after the Order of *Aaron*, who and his Sons were merely mortal Men, and in their Turns died out of their Office, and were succeeded by others of their *Line*; and they all had Sins of their own to atone for, before they could offer a Sacrifice for the Sins of *Israel*: But Christ being holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from Sinners, could have no Occasion to offer any propitiatory Sacrifice on his own Account; but, by offering up himself, he at once expiated the Sins of his People: And as he never died out of his Office; so, being made higher than the Heavens, he continually and completely exercises it alone by himself, without any Predecessor or Successor in it. This Change of *the Priesthood* naturally brought on an Abolition of *the Law*, to which it belong'd, on account of the Insufficiency of that Law and Priesthood to perfect the Worship and Happiness of the Church; and introduced the Gospel-State, which depends upon, and derives the most substantial Efficacy from the Priesthood of Christ. How much better Grounds of Hope then have we in him, and in the Gospel of the Grace of God through him, than ever could have been had by the Law! And with what humble Confidence, and happy Success, may the believing Sinner now approach God in Christ! He is the Surety of the new Covenant to undertake with God his Father, that all Requirements should be answered in order to a secure Accomplishment of its great and precious Promises; and he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him; since he ever lives, as a righteous Advocate, to make Intercession for them.

CHAP. VIII.

The Apostle, having finished his Argument drawn from the Comparison of the Priesthood of Melchisedec *with that of* Aaron, *shews that his main Design therein was to demonstrate the Excellency of Christ's Priesthood, above that of* Aaron, *which he adds still further Light to, by comparing him with, and preferring him to, the High Priests under the Law, with respect to the Place where he officiates, the Sacrifice he offers, and the Covenant, of which he is the Mediator,* 1—6. *And he goes, by way of Digression, into a Representation of the great Excellence of this Covenant above the former, which is now abolished,* 7—13.

TEXT.	PARAPHRASE.
1 NOW *of the Things which we have spoken,* this	1. NOW what I have chiefly in View in all that has been so largely insisted on, in the Comparison between *Aaron* and *Melchisedec*, who was a most eminent Type

is the Sum: We have such an High Priest, who is set on the Right Hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens;

Type of Christ *, may be summed up in this; We, of the New Testament-Church, have such a great and glorious High Priest in the Person of our Lord Jesus, as incomparably excels all others, and particularly all the Priests of the *Aaronical* Order; as further appears from *the Place*, where he officiates, who having made Atonement for Sin by the Sacrifice of himself, which he offered upon Earth, is now exalted in his human Nature, and perpetually abides in the highest Dignity and Authority for the completing of his Office, and securing the Application of the Benefits of his Purchase, as he appears in the immediate Presence of the divine Majesty, which may be figuratively expressed by his being seated on the most honourable Side (as the Right Hand is deemed to be) of God the Father's most illustrious Display of his Glory, as on his magnificent Throne in the highest Heaven. (See the Note on *Acts* vii. 55.)

2 *A Minister of the Sanctuary, and of the true Tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not Man.*

2. And, notwithstanding his glorious Exaltation at the Father's Right Hand, he condescends to appear and act in his priestly Character, as a public Minister, officiating towards, and before God for us about sacred Things, not in the earthly Sanctuary, or *Judaic* Holy of Holies, which he never enter'd into, but in the true Holy of Holies, the Habitation of God's most eminent Glory, even Heaven itself, which is called with emphatical Peculiarity, *his Sanctuary*, (Pf. cii. 19) and was typified by that on Earth; nor does our blessed Lord minister in the shadowy earthly Tabernacle, in which he never officiated as a Priest; but in the true substantial Tabernacle of his human Nature, of which *that* was a Type or Figure; and (*ἣν*) which was formed by the immediate Power of God, as exerted in the miraculous Operation of the Holy Ghost upon the Virgin *Mary*, (Luke i. 35) † and was not erected by human Aid or

* The Word (κεφαλαιον) here rendered *the Sum*, signifies either *a brief Summary*, or *the chief Thing*.

† Some understand the *Tabernacle*, of which Christ is said to be the Minister, as signifying the *universal Church*, for whose Benefit, it must be allow'd, he officiates as their great High Priest. But he doth not officiate in, or by them, as the Means of his heavenly Ministration, which seems to be what the Apostle here intends, in Allusion to the *Jewish* Tabernacle, in which, and by Means of which, the antient Priests performed their holy Ministrations. Others take *the Tabernacle* to signify the same with *the Sanctuary*, even Heaven itself: But this too much carries the Face of a needless Tautology; since *and* (και) here cannot be *exegetical* because *the Article* (της) follows it. I therefore rather apprehend that *the Sanctuary* and *Tabernacle* may be considered with a Distinction of one from the other; as *the first* alludes to the *most holy Place*, which was a Figure of Heaven; and *the second* alludes to the *Whole* of that sacred Edifice, which was erected under the Law. And as God dwelt in the Tabernacle with visible Emblems of his Glory, which filled the House, as it afterwards did *the Temple*; (*Ex.* xl. 34, 35, compared with 1 *Kings* viii. 10, 11) so that Tabernacle may very properly be regarded as a Type of the *Body* or *human Nature* of Christ: For the human Body is called a Tabernacle, 2 *Cor.* v. 1, and 2 *Pet.* i. 14; and our Lord in his Incarnation *dwelt* or *tabernacled* (εσκηνωσε) *amongst us*, (John i. 14) and spoke of his own Body as a *Temple*, in Allusion to the *Jewish* Temple, which in its Use succeeded the Tabernacle, *John* ii. 19, 21; we are also told that *in him*, as in its Tabernacle, *dwells all the Fulness of the Godhead bodily*: (Col. ii. 9.) And as the Tabernacle was set up only for a Time, to be pulled down on Occasion, and then erected again; (*Numb.* i. 51, and x. 21) so was the Body of our Lord in his Death and Resurrection. We may also further observe that *the Sanctuary*,

or Assistance, as that Tabernacle was, in which the legal Priests minister'd, and which was prepared, set up, and fasten'd with Stakes and Cords, by the Hands of Men. And since both the *Sanctuary* and *Tabernacle*, in which Christ now carries on his priestly Office, are more excellent than any that preceded them, we may assuredly conclude, that *the Sacrifice*, which he, as a High Priest, presents to God therein, must needs be so too.

3 *For every High Priest is ordained to offer Gifts and Sacrifices: Wherefore* it is *of Necessity that this Man have somewhat also to offer.*

3. For the special Business of every High Priest, for which he is appointed and authorized of God, is to present Oblations and Sacrifices of Atonement, which had been slain and offered, *before* he carried their Blood into the holy Place, and *in order to* his doing so *; It was therefore absolutely necessary that, to answer that Character, this great Gospel-High Priest, (τοῦτον) of whom we are speaking, should also have a Sacrifice to offer, suitable to his Dignity, as God-Man, and to the glorious State and Place of his present Ministration; and that he should present it in the heavenly Sanctuary before the Throne of God, as the antient typical High Priest did the Blood of the legal Sacrifices before the Mercy Seat in the most holy Place.

4 *For if he were on Earth, he should not be a Priest, seeing that there are Priests that offer Gifts according to the Law:*

4. For if he were to have continued only upon Earth, he could not have officiated, as a High Priest, in that most glorious Part of his Office, which was to be performed in the *Sanctuary*; since there are High Priests of *Aaron*'s Order, that present Sacrifices in the *Jewish* Holy of Holies, according to God's Institution of that Office under the Law; which admits of no Priest of any other Tribe, and consequently not of Christ, who was of the Tribe of *Judah*, to be joined with them. (See the Note on *Chap.* vii. 13.)

Sanctuary, though expressed by a *plural Noun*, (τῶν ἁγίων) signifies *the holiest of all*, or *the holy Place*, as 'tis render'd *Chap.* ix. 8, 12, 25; and *that* is the Sense, which I take to be most directly intended here: And yet as it also signifies *holy Things*, and as Christ's ministring in his priestly Office is about such Things, it might not be amiss to suggest that Thought also.

* The true *Key*, as I take it, of the Apostle's Argument in this and the two following Verses is, that in Allusion to the Office of the High Priest under the Law, who was to kill and offer the Sacrifices on the great Day of Atonement, before he enter'd, and carried their Blood, into the holy Place within the Vail, as was expresly ordained, (*Lev.* xvi. 5---15) Christ offered the Sacrifice of himself in his Death, before he entered into Heaven with his own Blood, to present the Virtue of it before the Throne of Grace, and, as it were, to sprinkle it on the Throne, (which was typified by the Mercy-Seat) for rendering it effectual unto all the great and blessed Purposes, for which it had been shed and offered in a sacrificial Way on the Cross: For this was a necessary Part of the Service, which belonged to the Offering, in order to its fully answering its End, and seems to me to be here principally intended; rather than the Offering of the atoning Sacrifice itself on the Brazen Altar, which was finished by the High Priest,* before he entered with its Blood into the Sanctuary, as Christ's also was on the Cross, when through the eternal Spirit he offered himself without Spot to God, before he enter'd into Heaven: And therefore it would have been inconsistent with the Nature of Christ's Priesthood for him to have continued on Earth, as the Apostle argues in the next Verse; because *the Sanctuary*, in which his Ministry as a High Priest was to be finished, according to the typical Meaning of the Holy of Holies, is *Heaven itself*. This I humbly conceive sets the whole Discourse on this Head in a much clearer, easier and more harmonious Light, than I could ever gather from the numerous perplexed Accounts that have been given of it.

5 Who serve unto the Example and Shadow of heavenly Things, as Moses was admonished of God, when he was about to make the Tabernacle. For, See (saith he) that thou make all Things according to the Pattern shewed to thee in the Mount.

5. Who minister in that Tabernacle, and do the Service of it, which was a typical Draught and shadowy Representation of the true Tabernacle, † in which our blessed Lord now officiates in Heaven, as an intercessory High Priest; Intimations of which were given by God to *Moses*, when he received divine Orders of what he should do in framing and finishing that earthly Tabernacle: For when he was going about that Work, God said to him, (*Ex.* xxv. 40) Be very careful and exact in your Superintendency and Directions for making every, even the most minute Part of the Tabernacle, in which I will dwell, without the least Variation from, but just according to that Model, which was plainly drawn out to your View in the Vision I gave you of it in the Mount; which Model, as it was of heavenly Original, exactly answerable to the Idea of it in the Mind of God, was also a typical Platform of the Inhabitation of the Deity in the Tabernacle of Christ's human Nature, in which he ministers in the heavenly Sanctuary.

6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent Ministry, by how much also he is the Mediator of a better Covenant, which was established upon better Promises.

6. And (δὲ) now our Blessed Lord, in his exalted State, has evidently obtained, by a singular Appointment and Call of God his Father, and accordingly is now actually engaged in, a far more excellent, honourable and beneficial Office of Ministration, than all that ever was exercised before him under the old Covenant-Dispensation; as on many other Accounts, that have been already insisted on at large; (*ver.* 1—5, and *Chap.* vii.) so in Proportion to the incomparably greater Excellence and Advantage of the *New Covenant*-Dispensation, (*ver.* 8) § of which he is the only

† The Difficulty of this Verse is so great, and the various Interpretations of it, by all the Commentators I have seen, are so obscure and unsatisfying, that I have humbly attempted to give what seems to me to be the most easy and intelligible Account of it, in Consistence with Mr. *Peirce's* Criticisms on some of the Words, which they that are so minded may consult; and which indeed first led my Thoughts to this Sense, though it be *mostly* different from his, and from all others that I have met with.

§ For understanding this and all the following Verses to the End of the Chapter, in Confirmation of what is here asserted concerning Christ, as the Mediator of a *better Covenant*, which is also called a *new Covenant*, ver. 8, 13, It is necessary to consider what that *first Covenant* was, which this *better* and *new Covenant* is preferred to. It doubtless was the Covenant, which God made with *Israel* at Mount *Sinai*, as appears from *ver.* 9, where 'tis called *the Covenant that he made with their Fathers, when he took them by the Hand to lead them out of Egypt*. This (taking it all together) was not merely *the Covenant of Works*, as containing Terms of Acceptance with God to *eternal Life*: For God never did, nor could accept sinful Creatures to eternal Life upon the Foot of that broken Covenant. Nor was it merely *the Covenant of Grace*. For Christ was always the Mediator of the Covenant of Grace; and its Promises were always, for Substance, the same; and so he could not be said, by way of Distinction, to be the Mediator of an *absolutely better Covenant*; nor could it be said to be established on *better Promises*, than that. I therefore apprehend that it was a *temporary Covenant of Peculiarity* with the *Jews*, which consider'd barely as a Covenant between God and them, as he was their *political King* and they were his *national Subjects*, related only to the *temporal Blessings* of this Life, and Prosperity in the Land of *Canaan*; and so was delivered to that Nation, as a Body-politic, under the Form of a Covenant of Works, upon the fulfilling of which they were to inherit the Blessings of that Land. But considering it as a Covenant which God made with *the Church of Israel*, as *their God*, relating to their *spiritual and eternal Concerns*, it contained a Representation both of the original Covenant of Works, which they as Sinners had broke, and could not keep; and of the Covenant of Grace, which provided

for

only Mediator, for taking away all Manner of Difference between God and his People, and purchasing all its spiritual and eternal Blessings for them by the Sacrifice of himself; and for ratifying it by his Blood, as also for securing the Accomplishment of all its Promises, and enabling them to accept of it, and yield themselves to God according to it: This is a Covenant which was formed into an authoritative Establishment (νενομοθέτηται) upon more spiritual, advantageous and heavenly, extensive and absolute Promises, (*ver.* 10, 11, 12) than what were contained in the former

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for their Pardon and Justification. It set forth the original *Covenant of Works*, as *the Substance* of that Covenant was represented in the Law of the *Ten Commandments*; and as *the Form* of it was drawn out in Declarations, that *if a Man did the Things contained therein, he should live by them.* (Lev. xviii. 5.) This was not only the Condition of the Covenant, as it related to *temporal* Blessings, but was likewise a Draught of the original *Covenant of Works*, relating to *spiritual* Blessings, as appears from the Apostle's mentioning this Tenor of it, with a Reference to the *Gentiles*, who never were under the *Sinai*-Covenant, (*Rom.* x. 5, and *Gal*, iii. 10, 12) and from his speaking of *Gentile*-Believers being *deliver'd from its Curse*, by Christ's being *made a Curse for them.* (Gal. iii. 13.) Now the Design of God in thus including the *Covenant of Works*, in the Law given to *Israel*, might be to lay before them a perfect Rule of Righteousness, and to shew them the Necessity of a sinless Conformity to it, in order to their obtaining Justification in his Sight by their own Works; and, consequently, to convince them of their Sin and Danger, as they were Transgressors of this original Law; of the Impossibility of obtaining eternal Life by their own Obedience to it; and of the Necessity of an Atonement for Sin, and of a better Righteousness than their own to justify them before God; and so it was *subservient* to the Intimations that were given in the *Mosaic* Dispensation of the *Covenant of Grace*. Accordingly the *Sinai*-Covenant included also a Representation of *the Covenant of Grace*, as *the Promises* of a Saviour made to *Adam* immediately upon the Fall, and afterwards, with further Enlargement, to *Abraham*, were not disannulled, or rendered ineffectual, by the *Mosaic* Law; (*Gal.* iii. 17) and as the various Sacrifices, Washings and Purifyings by Blood and Water, were appointed in the *Sinai*-Covenant itself, to *prefigure Christ*, and point the Church of *Israel* to him for cleansing from the Guilt of Sin by his atoning Blood, and for renewing Grace by his sanctifying Spirit: And God all along dealt with the believing *Israelites* according to, and saved them by this Covenant, in Virtue of the Promise of the *Seed of the Woman, that should bruise the Serpent's Head, and of the Seed of Abraham, in whom all Nations should be blessed*, which Promises still subsisted and ran through the *Mosaic* Dispensation, as a Ground of Faith in the Grace of God, through the promised Messiah, for eternal Life; though the carnal *Jews* turned the Whole of that Dispensation into a Covenant of Works, and sought Righteousness for Justification to Life by their own Obedience to it; and so fell short of Christ and Salvation by him, as the Apostle tells us, *Rom.* ix. 31—33. — Now taking the *Sinai*-Covenant *alone*, and *by itself*, as made between God and *Israel* under the strict Notion of his being their *political King*; and taking it as containing *a Plan* of the original *Covenant of Works*; the Covenant of Grace, under the Gospel-Dispensation, was *intirely a new Covenant established upon better Promises*, relating to the heavenly Inheritance, in Opposition to both these Considerations of the *Sinai*-Covenant, in which it is spoken of as the *first* and *Old Covenant*: (ver. 7, 13.) But taking it in its *greater Latitude*, with all its Appendages, as including *the Whole* of the *Mosaic* Dispensation, with a Reference to *Israel's spiritual and eternal Concerns*; *The Covenant of Grace*, under the Gospel-Dispensation of it, may be called a *new Covenant established on better Promises*, not indeed *absolutely*, but in *certain Respects*; because the Light, Liberty and Grace contained herein, are more clearly, expresly and abundantly promised in this, than they ever were before in that former Dispensation of it; and because of the more spiritual Ordinances of Worship, that are contained in this, than were in that: For as *the Law of Love* is called a *new Commandment*, (John xiii. 34) not *absolutely* a new one, since it was, for Substance, contained in the Decalogue, and other Parts of the Old Testament many Ages before; but a *new Commandment*, with respect to the *new Discoveries, Motives and Enforcements*, &c. with which our Lord deliver'd it: (See the Paraphrase and Note on *John* xiii. 34.) So the *Sinai*-Covenant, in the whole Compass of it, may be called *the Covenant of Grace, clothed with the Darkness and Terror of the legal Dispensation*; and, in Distinction from it, a *clear, disencumber'd, spiritual and glorious Edition and Enlargement of it*, under the Gospel-Dispensation, may be called a *new and better Covenant.* And that is the View, in which I have chiefly consider'd them in this and the following Verses: For unless we suppose the *first Covenant* to have a Relation to *spiritual* Benefits in this Argument, it loses its Propriety and Force.

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legal Administration of it at Mount *Sinai*. (ver. 9) And that *this* is a better and more perfect Covenant, than *that*, is evident.

7 For if that first Covenant *had been faultless, then should no Place have been sought for the second.*

7. For if the former *Sinai* Covenant had been free from all Defects, as to its Establishment, Light, Grace and Efficacy, for perfecting the State of the Church, which indeed it never was designed for, how good soever it was in itself, and how fit soever to answer its particular Ends, which it was undoubtedly well suited to, as God himself was the Author of it: If, I say, it had not been insufficient to answer all the Ends of his Grace towards his People in their Church-State upon Earth, which is to issue in their Perfection in Heaven, then there certainly would have been no Occasion for the Wisdom of God to have contrived, nor for his People to have desired, another more spiritual and complete Administration of the Covenant of Grace upon Earth; nor would there have been any Room for introducing it under the Gospel-State, as 'tis plain there was

8 For finding Fault with them, he saith, Behold, the Days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new Covenant with the House of Israel, and with the House of Judah:

8. For God having accused and reproved the *Jews*, by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, (Chap. xxxi. 31, &c.) for their Transgressions of that Covenant, which indeed did not secure their Obedience, he says, Observe with Attention, Wonder and Joy, The Days are coming and hasting apace, (ημεραι ερχονται) says the sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth, even the Days of the Messiah, whom ye expect to come; when I will assuredly set up and finish (συντελεσω) a new Covenant-Dispensation of free and absolute Promises; and I will establish it irrevocably and unalterably with my People, both with those that are among the ten Tribes of *Israel*, and with those of the House of *Judah*, including that of *Benjamin*, who all in their Turns have shamefully violated my present Covenant with them: And I will make it, not with them only, that belong to either of these Tribes; but with all my spiritual *Israel*, who were typified by them *; and who under the Gospel-State, whether they be *Jews*, or *Gentiles*, shall be called *the Israel of God*. (Gal. vi. 16.)

9 Not according to the Covenant that I made with their Fathers, in the Day when I took them by the Hand to lead them out of the Land of Egypt; because they continued not in my Covenant, and I regarded

9. This new Covenant shall not be weak and ineffectual, according to the Tenor of that Covenant of Peculiarity, which I entered into with *Israel*'s natural and Covenant-Ancestors, at the Time when, with all the Tenderness, Care and Condescension of a Father, I as it were led them, like weak and helpless Children, by the Hand, to deliver them, in the Greatness of my Power and Mercy, out of all the Oppressions, Miseries and Slavery, under which they were in sore Bondage in the Land of *Egypt*. This new Covenant, I say, shall not be of the same Strain and Constitution

* That *the true Israel of God*, of what Nation soever, are to be included under these Characters, or Descriptions of *Israel* and *Judah*, appears; because the Persons here intended are those, to whom God *absolutely* promised that he would actually and efficaciously [illegible] his renewing and pardoning Grace *ver.* 10, 11, 12, which cannot be said of the whole Body of *Israel* after the Flesh, much less of every one of them; but holds good as to all the *spiritual Israel*, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, and to none but them.

them not, saith the Lord.

with that; because through the Treachery of their own Hearts, which that Covenant of Peculiarity, as such, did not absolutely provide against, they were not stedfast in it; but despised and made it void by breaking through all its sacred Bonds; and I thereupon withdrew my Favour and Protection from them, and did not regard them, according to the Tenor of that Covenant, with the Love, Care and Tenderness of a Husband † any more; as, in Case of their Disobedience, I had given them Reason to expect that I would not, says the Lord Jehovah, who, being highly provoked by their unfaithful Behaviour, justly rejected them.

10 *For this* is *the Covenant that I will make with the House of Israel after those Days, saith the Lord; I will put my Laws into their Mind, and write them in their Hearts: And I will be to them a God; and they shall be to me a People.*

10. This new Covenant shall be of a much better and surer Tenor than that: For this is the Sum and Substance of the Covenant, which I, of my own mere Grace, will make with all my spiritual *Israel*, first of the *Jews*, and then of the *Gentiles*, under the Gospel-State, after the Old Testament-Dispensation shall cease, says the great Jehovah; I will inlighten and renew their Understandings, that they may behold the Spirituality, Purity and Extent of the moral Law, by an inward Operation upon their Minds; and will give them a plain Insight into the Doctrine of Salvation by the Messiah §: And I will not only set these Things with the clearest and strongest Evidence before their Minds; but will furthermore make a thorough Change upon their Wills, Affections, and all the practical Powers of their Souls, by engraving them, not (as I did the Law of the Ten Commandments) by a miraculous Impression on Tables of Stone; but by a supernatural gracious Operation of my Spirit, who shall write them *in the fleshly Tables of their Hearts*, (2 Cor. iii. 3) to guide and govern them in all their Ways. And, according to this new and better Covenant, I will be an all-sufficient God, in a Way of Protection, Favour and Blessing, to them; and will own them, and perform all Things for them, as their God: And they shall be inclined and enabled, by my Grace, to answer their Obligations to me, in a Way of Faith and Love, Duty and Obedience, and of owning me in a becoming Profession of my Name, as my peculiar Covenant-People; and so I will take effectual Care that this my Covenant be not liable to be made void on their Part, any more than on my own, as the first Covenant was.

† What is here render'd *I regarded them not*, as it lies in the Translation of the [illegible], is render'd from the *Hebrew*, in *Jer.* xxxi. 32, the Place here quoted, *Though I was an Husband to them.* But as the Sense is much the same, according to the View I have given of it; so Dr. *Pocock* has learnedly shown that the *Hebrew* Word (בעל) signifies both to *govern* and *to be a Husband*, and to *neglect*, *despise*, and *refuse*. (See his *Miscel.* Chap. i.)

§ By *his Laws* we may understand primarily the *Moral Law*, but not to the Exclusion of the wider Sense of the Word, in which it is sometimes taken, to signify any *Doctrine* of divine Revelation, which God requires us to receive with the Obedience of Faith. (See the Note on *Rom.* iii. 27.)

11. And

11 *And they shall not teach every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother, saying, Know the Lord. For all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.*

11. And the Light and Energy of this supernatural Illumination of their Minds, and of this writing my Laws in their Hearts, shall be so clear, extensive and powerful in all important Points, that, comparatively speaking, none of them shall have like Occasion, as there was under the former dark Dispensation, to explain them one to another, merely by the typical and shadowy Representations therein made of them; much less shall they depend upon, and rest in *external* Teachings, as many of the *Jews* have done, and *that* according to the corrupt Notions of their *Rabbies:* * They shall have no Need, after this Manner, to say, each of them to his Neighbour and Acquaintance, or to his Kindred according to the Flesh, or Brother in a religious Relation, Follow my Instructions to bring you to the Knowledge of Christ, and of God in him: For all *Sion*'s Children shall be efficaciously taught by my Spirit, (*Is.* liv. 13, and *John* vi. 45.) that they may experimentally, believingly, affectionately and practically know me for themselves, according to the plain Revelation I shall make of my Perfections, Counsels and Will, and of the Way of Salvation through the Messiah, in the Gospel, whether they be the weakest or the strongest Believers, or whatsoever Difference there may be among them, as to the Degrees of their Knowledge of me.

12 *For I will be merciful to their Unrighteousnesses, and their Sins and their Iniquities will I remember no more.*

12. For, that there may be no Obstruction to the free Communications of my Grace, and Performance of my Covenant-Promises to them, (ιλεως εσομαι ταις αδικιαις αυτων) I will mercifully pardon their unrighteous Deeds, through Faith in Christ's Propitiation; (ιλαστηριον, *Rom.* iii. 25.) and as to all their sinful Swervings from my Commandments, (αμαρτιων) and their Departures from the Rule of Duty, and the chief End of Life; and all their Disconformities to, and Transgressions of my Law, (ανομιων) I, whose Prerogative and Glory it is to *forgive Iniquity, and Transgression, and Sin*, (Ex. xxxiv. 7.) even I will as intirely pardon them, as if I had quite forgot them; and will never call them to Mind, so as to proceed in Judgment to condemn these my Covenant-ones for them; but will throughly *blot them* all out, and *cast them behind my Back*, and as *into the Depths of the Sea*, (Is. xxxviii. 17, and xliv. 22, and *Micah* vii. 19.) that they,

* We are not to suppose that *they shall not teach every Man*, &c. is designed to exclude all public and private, ministerial, family and social Instruction: For this is founded on the Law of Nature, and is inforced in the New Testament-Institution of a Gospel-Ministry to continue to the Consummation of all Things, (*Mat.* xxviii. 20, and *Ephes.* iv. 11, 12, 13.) and in the Obligation that it has laid upon *Christian-Parents* to *bring up their Children in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*; (Ephes. vi. 4.) as also in the Directions that are given in this very Epistle (*Chap.* iii. 13, and x. 24, 25.) to *private* Christians, to *exhort one another daily*, &c. This Passage therefore must be taken, either in a *comparative* Sense, as such Expressions often are: (See *Is.* xliii. 18, *Jer.* xxiii. 18, and *Mat.* ix. 13.) Or else with Reference to *that Manner* of teaching, which was used, and rested in under the Obscurities of the Old-Testament-Dispensation, and the corrupt Interpretations of the *Jewish* Doctors; or both may be included.

like Crimes forgotten, as well as forgiven, may never be brought to Remembrance, as under the legal Dispensation the Sins of *Israel* were every Year; *(Chap.* x. 3.) nor they be upbraided with them any more.

13 *In that he saith, A new* Covenant, *he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.*

13. Now, to wind up this important Article, 'Tis evident from all this, that as God promised to make with his People what he calls *(ver.* 8.) *a new Covenant*, of this happy, secure, free and absolute Tenor, with relation to spiritual and eternal Blessings, in a better Administration under the Gospel-State, than that which preceded it, he thereby intimates the Weakness and Unprofitableness of the *Mosaic* Dispensation, *(Chap.* vii. 18.) and its being to be set aside and disannull'd, as an antiquated Thing, quite out of Date: And as whatsoever is wearing out through Infirmity, or is coming to a Dissolution through Age, like Persons and Garments, or any other Things, that grow old, and past Service, is very near unto actually expiring, or ceasing to be of any further Use; so that Dispensation, with all its Rites, Ceremonies and Institutions, will very soon be totally abolished, and put, as it were, out of Sight; (εγγυς αφανισμου) when, according to our Lord's Prediction, *(Mat.* xxiv. 1, 2.) the Temple at *Jerusalem*, on which the principal Part of the *Jewish* Worship and Ordinances depended, will be utterly destroyed, the Time of which is now just at Hand.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How glorious is the Lord Jesus Christ in his present Ministration, as our great High Priest! He continues to exercise this Office, in the Tabernacle of his miraculously formed Human Body, at the Right Hand of God the Father in the heavenly Sanctuary; and there presents the Merit of his atoning Sacrifice in his Intercession. How necessary for us, as well as honourable to him, was his entering into the holiest of all, to fulfill that important Part of his Office! This could not have been finished by his continuing on Earth; because there were *Aaronical* Priests, which Order he was not of, but superior to; and none but those of that Order could legally officiate in the earthly Sanctuary; and Heaven itself was the only proper Place for him to appear in for this Purpose. And how much more excellent is his Sacrifice, than all the Offerings of former High Priests, as to its Dignity, and the Sanctuary in which it is presented to God! They were mere Shadows of what is done by Christ; but the Perfection and Glory of all is accomplished in him, as the Mediator of the new Covenant.—How close should we keep to divine Revelation in every Thing, that pertains to the Service of God! As *Moses* was to make all Things, relating to the Tabernacle, exactly according to the Pattern which God had shewn him in the Mount; so all our Worship is to be according to *Institution*, without any Addition, Alteration, or Abatement.—How much better is the Gospel-Dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, than that which was made with *Israel* at Mount *Sinai*! It has a better Mediator, and stands on the Foot of better Promises. Though that Covenant was defective in its Securities, and was broken by *Israel*, after God had wrought Wonders of Mercy in delivering them out of *Egypt*, and he thereupon at length cast them off as a People, to whom, by that Covenant, he would no longer be a Husband; yet, blessed be his holy Name, he hath made with his spiritual *Israel* of all Nations, under the Gospel-State, a new Covenant, which is perfect in its Nature, and every Way suited to secure its gracious Design. It contains rich and free, clear, express and absolute Promises of a spiritual Relation to God, as the God of his People, to be their Portion, and to engage their Love and Duty to him; and Promises of Mercy to forgive all their Iniquities, and never to remember any of their Sins against them; and to lead them into a plain and saving Acquaintance with himself in Christ, to write his Law and Gospel in their Hearts, and to preserve them from utter Apostacy. O the Happiness

and

and Safety of the leaſt, as well as of the moſt eminent of thoſe, that are in Covenant with God, who has thus graciouſly undertaken for himſelf and them! O bleſſed Tenor of this pure, unmixed Diſpenſation of the new Covenant! How unchangeable and perpetual is it! It ſhall never wax old or vaniſh away, like the *Sinai*-Covenant; but ſhall abide in full Force, Virtue and Vigour, as the laſt and moſt perfect Adminiſtration of it in this World; and ſhall remain, till it iſſue in the everlaſting Happineſs of all the Heirs of Promiſe in the World to come.

CHAP. IX.

The Apoſtle, returning to his main Argument, gives an Account of the Jewiſh *Tabernacle and its Utenſils,* 1—5. *Shows their Uſe and Meaning, as to their figurative Services and Sacrifices,* 6—10. *Explains their Accompliſhment in Chriſt,* 11—22; *and infers the Neceſſity, ſuperior Dignity and Efficacy of his Prieſthood and Sacrifice, in an Application of what he had ſaid about thoſe, that belong'd to the Tabernacle under the Law,* 23—28.

TEXT.

1 THEN *verily the firſt* Covenant *had alſo Ordinances of divine Service, and a worldly Sanctuary.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. TO return then to what we have been ſaying about the earthly and heavenly Tabernacle and Sanctuary, (*Chap.* viii. 1—5.) There did indeed belong even to the *Moſaic* Diſpenſation of the Covenant, (which has been call'd but now (*Chap.* viii. 13.) *the firſt* Covenant*) various typical Ordinances of God's Appointment for religious Worſhip; and a ſacred magnificent Tent or Tabernacle, which, incluſive of the whole Fabric, may be ſtiled in a lax Senſe the Sanctuary for the Celebration of thoſe Ordinances; And which was made of earthly Materials by the Hands of Men; and, excluſive of its figurative Meaning, was of a worldly Nature, as well as that its Station was in this World, † in Oppoſition to that which is heavenly, (whereof we ſhall afterwards ſpeak, *ver.* 6, &c.)

2 *For there was a Tabernacle made; the firſt, wherein* was *the*

2. For, ſuitable to the Nature and Deſign of that carnal Diſpenſation, there was an earthly Tabernable ‖ prepared and built, according to the Pattern ſhewn to *Moſes* in the

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* Many *Greek* Copies read (πρώτη σκηνὴ) the *firſt Tabernacle*; but *that* ſeems to make a Tautology in this and the Beginning of the next Verſe; I therefore chooſe to keep to our, and many other antient Verſions, which properly enough ſupply the Word *Covenant*, referring back to the laſt Verſe of the preceding Chapter, which ſpeaks of the *firſt Covenant* (πρώτην) *being made old*, as is manifeſtly intended, though the Word *Covenant* be not there expreſs'd in the *Greek*; and here it is ſhown what were the Ordinances pertaining to that Covenant. The curious Reader may conſult Dr. *Owen* on this Side, and Dr. *Whitby* on the other Side of the Queſtion about it.

† This Building was of an oblong ſquare Figure of thirty Cubits, or (reckoning each Cubit to be a Foot and a half) forty-five Feet in Length, and ten Cubits, or fifteen Feet in Breadth, and the ſame in Height. But 'tis thought by many, that theſe Cubits were two or three Inches longer, than ours. (See *Univerſal Hiſtory*, Vol. I. Page 652. Fol.)

‖ The *Sanctuary*, ver. 1, and the *Tabernacle* in the Beginning of this Verſe apparently mean the ſame Thing; theſe Terms being often uſed promiſcuouſly, one for the other; and they are both to be underſtood here, as taking in the Whole of that ſacred Edifice, which bears the Name of the *Tabernacle*, *ver.* 8. and *Chap.* viii. 5; though at other Times they are uſed variouſly, and the *Sanctuary* may ſignify only one Part of it, and the *Tabernacle* another, as in the laſt Clauſe of this Verſe, and *ver.* 3.

Mount,

Candlestick, and the Table, and the Shew-Bread; which is called the Sanctuary.

Mount, (*Chap.* viii. 5.) which consisted of two principal Parts, as the Temple also afterwards did. In one Part was the Candlestick * with burning Lamps of Oil, which might prefigure the Fulness of spiritual Light, that is in Christ, to be communicated by his Spirit, in the Administration of Gospel-Ordinances to the Church, (in which God dwells, as in his spiritual Temple or Tabernacle) according to the Measure of the Gift of Christ, (*Ephes.* iv. 7.) who walks in the Midst of the seven golden Candlesticks, and has seven Stars in his right Hand: (*Rev.* i. 12, 13, 16, 20, and iv. 5.) And there was in this Court of the Tabernacle the Table and the Shew-Bread † upon it; which may point us to the Communion that Believers have with God in Christ, and the Provision he has made for them in him, as the Bread of Life. (*John* vi. 35, 51.) These were some of the chief Furniture that was placed in, and peculiar to the Services of, this *first* Part of the Tabernacle; which was called the *Sanctuary*, or *holy Place*, (Ex. xxvi. 33.) as it was consecrated to the Honour and Worship of God, and sanctified by his Presence; and was the ordinary Court, in which the Priests officiated about holy Things.

3 *And after the second Vail, the Tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all;*

3. And the *second* Part of this sacred Edifice lay toward the West, beyond the second Vail, which hung down, like a large Curtain of curious Workmanship, to separate between that and the first Court; (*Ex.* xxvi. 31—33.) and is called, by Way of Eminence, *the Holy of Holies*, as being the most holy Place of all; because there God manifested himself in the most illustrious Emblems of Glory, and the High Priest only might enter into it with the Blood of the Sacrifices, and officiate there, and *that* only once a Year on the great Day of Atonement: Which was typical of Heaven, and of our great High Priest's entering into it, through the Vail of his Flesh, with his own Blood, to make Intercession for us. (*ver.* 12, and *Chap.* x. 20.)

* The Weight of this *Candlestick* was a Talent of beaten Gold all of a Piece; out of its Shaft or Shank proceeded six Branches, three on each Side, and a seventh in the Middle, on the Top of every one of them was a Lamp, into all of which was put pure Oil of Olives, with a Wick or Piece of Cotton for burning; and they were trimmed and recruited, by the Priest in waiting, every Morning and Evening. (See *Exod.* xxv. 31—39, and xxvii. 20.)

† This *Table* was made of *Shittim Wood*, which some suppose to have been *Mahogany*: but no Tree was so likely, as this, to afford such vast Boards of ten Cubits long and a Cubit and half broad, as were cut out of this Wood for the Tabernacle, (*Ex.* xxvi. 20, 21.) and Abundance of Mahogany Trees are said to grow not far from those Parts. The Table, we are speaking of, was two Cubits, or three Feet in Length, and one Cubit, or a Foot and half in Breadth, and a Cubit and half, or two Feet three Inches in Height, and was covered over with pure Gold, which had a Sort of Ogee, or an Edge of a rising golden Border, round about the Top, something like our Tea-Boards, and stood on four Feet. (*Ex.* xxv. 23—26.)—*The Shew Bread*, which was probably so called, because it stood continually, as it were, before the Face of the Lord in the holy Place, was made of the finest Wheat into Loaves, or Cakes, each of which was to contain two *Tenth Deals*, which made about three Wine Pints of Flower; *twelve* of which Loaves, according to the Number of the Tribes of *Israel*, were placed upon the Table in two Rows, or *Sets in Order*, (מערכות) six one upon another, in each Row; and fresh Loaves were set there every Sabbath Day, when the Priest took the old ones away, of which, by the Law, none but *Aaron* and his Sons were to eat. (*Lev.* xxiv. 5—9, compared with *Mat.* xii. 4.)

4 Which had the golden Censer, and the Ark of the Covenant overlaid round about with Gold, wherein was *the golden Pot that had Manna, and Aaron's Rod that budded, and the Tables of the Covenant;*

4. And the sacred Utensils, which belonged to the *Holiest of all*, were these. One of them was the Altar of Incense, * that was overlaid with fine Gold, from which the High Priest on the great Atonement-Day, having taken *the golden Censer*, and Fire from the Altar of Burnt-Offering, and then, having filled his Hands with the Incense, directly entered into the most holy Place; and, putting the Incense upon the Fire, a Cloud ascended from it, and covered the Mercy-Seat; (*Lev.* xvi. 12, 13.) which might signify the extreme Sufferings and fragrant Intercession of Christ: And in the Holy of Holies itself was a small Chest of Shittim Wood, covered over within and without with pure Gold; the Length of which was two Cubits and a half, or three Feet nine Inches, and the Breadth one Cubit and a half, or two Feet three Inches; and its Height the same: (*Ex.* xxxvii. 1, 2.) And this was called the *Ark of the Covenant*, and of the *Testimony* (*Ex.* xxv. 16, and xl. 3, 5.) as it was a Symbol of God's Covenant with *Israel*, and a Witness for or against them, according to their Obedience or Disobedience to the Law that was kept therein; and may be considered as directing them to Christ, who came to *fulfil the Law*, and *is the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believes.* (Mat. v. 17, and Rom. x. 4.) Hard by the Ark † was placed the *golden Pot*, containing a Parcel of the *Manna*, with which God fed *Israel* in the Wilderness; and which, according to divine Order, (*Ex.* xvi. 33, 34.) was miraculously kept from Putrefaction, as a perpetual Memorial before the Lord in the Sanctuary, and was typical of Christ, the

* Some have supposed that the *golden Censer* was kept in the *Holy of Holies*, just within the Vail, by the turning aside of which the High Priest took it to burn Incense before the Lord on the Anniversary Day of Atonement; and that the other Censers for the common Use of the Priests were of *Silver*: But others observe that the *golden Censer* (θυμιατηριον) may signify *the Altar of Incense*, which was overlaid with Gold. And I am inclined to think, with them, that 'tis so to be understood here; chiefly because there is otherwise no mention at all of this grand Utensil of the Tabernacle: And though it stood in the Court of the Priests for their daily Use, as well as the Candlestick and the Table with the Shew-Bread; yet as the Apostle's principal View in the present Discourse is to compare those Things with Christ, that most immediately relate to the *High Priest*; and the golden Altar of Incense, which stood just before the Vail, was of necessary and important Use in the *High Priest's* Ministration on the Expiation-Day, (*Lev.* xvi. 12, 13.) He therefore may be supposed to reckon it among the Things that pertain'd to the immediate Service of the most holy Place; but don't say, as he doth of all the following Particulars, that it was *in the* Holiest of all, only that the Holiest of all *had it* (εχουσα) with respect to *Use*, though not to *Situation*.

† 'Tis expresly said, 1 *Kings* viii. 9, *There was nothing in the Ark, save the two Tables of Stone, which Moses put there at Horeb*; and 'tis no small Difficulty to reconcile this with our Apostle's saying, *Wherein*, if he meant in the Ark, *was the golden Pot, that had Manna, and Aaron's Rod that budded, and the Tables of the Covenant*. The most common Way has been to suppose that, as the Preposition (εν) rendered *in*, sometimes also signifies *by*, answerable to *Beth* in the *Hebrew*, *the Pot of Manna and Aaron's Rod* were put, not *into*, but *by* the Ark in a Coffer adjoining to it. (See *Deut.* xxxi. 26, and 1 *Sam.* vi. 8.) Accordingly *the Pot of Manna* and *Aaron's Rod* were said to be laid before *the Testimony*, and *before the Ark*. (Ex. xvi. 34, and Numb. xvii. 10.) But as here is but *one Preposition*, and *that* goes immediately before *the golden Pot*, &c. Others think it to be a forced Construction to make it signify *by* with relation to the *golden Pot* and *Aaron's Rod*, and *in* with relation to the Tables of the Covenant, which were certainly *in the Ark* itself: And therefore they apprehend, which I think best solves the Difficulty, that *wherein* refers, not to the *Ark*, but to that Part of the *Tabernacle* (σκηνη) which is called just before (*ver.* 3.) *the Holiest of all*, (εν η) ver. 4, *in which* Tabernacle all these Utensils were placed, as Mr. *Peirce* supposes the golden Censer also was.

true

true and ever-living Bread. (*John* vi. 48—51.) There was alſo *Aaron*'s miraculous Rod, with which he and *Moſes* wrought many Wonders, and which, though a dry Stick, budded, bloſſom'd and brought forth Almonds all in one Night, to ſhow that God had choſen the Houſe of *Aaron* to the Prieſthood, in Preference to all others; and it was afterwards preſerved, by no leſs a Miracle, in its flouriſhing State before the Ark of the Teſtimony, for a continual Memorial: (*Numb.* xvii. 2—10.) In Correſpondence hereunto, Chriſt came forth, not without the moſt extraordinary Miracle in his Conception, as a *Rod out of the* withered *Stem of Jeſſe, and a Branch out of his Roots*, and as *a Root out of a dry Ground*; (Iſ. xi. 1, and liii. 2.) and God has manifeſted him to be our only Goſpel-High Prieſt, whoſe Office ſhall ever remain in a proſperous State. And there were in the Ark itſelf the two Tables of the Moral Law, conſiſting of the Ten Commandments, which the Lord wrote on the two Tables of Stone, that were cut out by *Moſes*, (Deut. x. 1, 2.) and contained the Covenant, to which all its other Articles related, that God made with *Iſrael* in *Horeb*; (Deut. v. 1—12, and 27—33.) and theſe being put into the Ark might intimate, that the moral Law ſhould ever continue to be an unchangeable Rule of all holy Obedience in the Hands of Chriſt; and ſhould be fulfilled by him, as a Covenant, for the Juſtification of all that believe in him. (*Mat.* v. 17, 18, and *Rom.* x. 4.)

5 *And over it the Cherubims of Glory, ſhadowing the Mercy-Seat; of which we cannot now ſpeak particularly.*

5. And over or above this Ark were two ſtately Figures called Cherubim,* of a glorious winged Form, made of pure Gold, which repreſented holy Angels; and one of them with one, and the other with another of his Wings, that met together in the Middle, overſpread the whole Top of the Mercy-Seat at ſome Height above it; the Cherubim being placed at each End, and beaten out of the ſame Maſs of fine Gold with the Mercy-Seat itſelf, which was an oblong ſquare Plate of ſolid Gold, exactly fitted in Length and Breadth to the Dimenſions of the Ark, and laid upon it as a Lid or Covering to it; and all together made a Repreſentation of a magnificent Throne, on which God appeared in the *Shechinah*, (an illuſtrious Emblem of the divine Glory) as dwelling between the Cherubim, and ſhining forth from thence; (*Pſ.* lxxx. 1.) and as meeting and communing with *Moſes*, and giving forth his holy Oracles from off the Mercy-

* Of what particular Form theſe *Cherubim* were is very uncertain; but we are told that they were made of *fine Gold*, and that there were *two* of them, whoſe Wings were ſtretched upwards over all the Mercy-Seat, they being placed at each End of it, with their Faces looking one toward the other, and downward toward the Mercy-Seat, *Ex.* xxv. 18—20: And they appear to have been deſigned to repreſent the *holy Angels*, who are Chriſt's Attendents, and God's Miniſters to do his Will; and who, in a beautiful Alluſion to the Poſture of theſe Figures, are ſaid to pry and ſearch, and, like Perſons ſtooping down, (παρακύψαι) to look into the Myſteries of Redemption by Jeſus Chriſt, 1 *Peter* i. 12.

Seat. (*Ex.* xxv. 22, and *Num.* vii. 89.) * Anſwerable hereunto God, who is attended with angelic Spirits in Heaven, ſhines forth on his Throne of Grace, from whence he reveals his Will, and communes with his People, through Jeſus Chriſt, who is the Goſpel High Prieſt, and the great Propitiation for Sin, (*Rom.* iii. 25.) as his Atonement is fully commenſurate to all the Demands of the broken Law, and was typify'd by the *Propitiatory* or *Mercy-Seat*, as a compleat Covering interpoſed between God, who appears on his Throne of Grace, and the Law as laid up in the Ark; and ſo covered the Tranſgreſſions of it from his avenging Eye, that true Believers in his Son might not be dealt with in a Way of Juſtice for them, according to their Deſerts. But of theſe Things, how ſignificant ſoever they be, 'tis not ſo much our Buſineſs at preſent particularly to diſcourſe, with Regard to their myſtical Meaning, † as it is to explain the *Ordinances* of divine Worſhip, relating to the Tabernacle, to which we ſhall proceed, as the principal Point in View.

6 Now when theſe Things were thus ordained, the Prieſts went always into the firſt Tabernacle, accompliſhing the Service of God:

6. Now the whole Fabric of this ſacred Houſe, together with all its Utenſils, being thus thoroughly prepared and finiſhed, (κατεσκευασμένων) according to the Pattern ſhewn to *Moſes* in the Mount, (*Chap.* viii. 5.) The ordinary Prieſts went every Day, and at all Times as Occaſions required, into the firſt Part of the Tabernacle, which was called the holy Place, in Diſtinction from the Holieſt of all; (*Ex.* xxvi. 33.) and there they performed all the Services that belonged to their Office, relating to the Worſhip of God; ſuch as offering Sacrifices, dreſſing the Lamps, and burning Incenſe on the golden Altar.

7 But into the ſecond went *the High Prieſt alone once every Year, not without Blood, which he offered for himſelf, and*

7. But the High Prieſt, and he only, who was the moſt eminent Figure of Chriſt, went into the ſecond Part of the Tabernacle, which lay within the Vail, and was called the Holieſt of all; (*ver.* 3.) and he himſelf went into it, not every Day, as the ordinary Prieſts did into the firſt Part of the Tabernacle; but only on one Day of every Year, ‖

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* See the Deſcription of *the Tabernacle*, and of all its Utenſils more at large in *Univerſal Hiſtory*, Vol. I. Page 651—659. Fol.

† This Recital of the various Utenſils of the Tabernacle intimates that there was a myſtical Meaning in them, though the Apoſtle did not intend to inſiſt upon it, as not being neceſſary to his immediate Deſign.

‖ Though the High Prieſt entered into the Holy of Holies only on one Day of the Year, which was the great Day of Atonement, or the *tenth* Day of the *ſeventh Month*, Lev. xvi. 29, 30, or in the Month which the *Jews* call *Tizri*, and anſwers partly to our *September*, and partly to our *October*, and was the ſeventh Month of their *eccleſiaſtical* Year; yet he entered into it *twice* or *thrice*, at leaſt, on that Day. *Two* of theſe Times the Apoſtle here takes Notice of: (*ver.* 12, 13.) *One* was, when he brought into it the Blood of a *Bullock*, as a *Sin Offering*; and of a Ram, as a Burnt-Offering *for himſelf and his Houſe*: (Lev. xvi. 3. 6.) The *other* was, when he carried into it the Blood of a *Goat* for a Sin-Offering for the People. (*Lev.* xvi 11, 15.) And after the Bullock was killed, but before its Blood was ſprinkled on the Mercy-Seat, the High Prieſt entered with burning Incenſe, to prepare the Way by the Cloud that roſe from it, and cover'd the Mercy-Seat, (*Lev.* xvi. 13, 14) And ſome ſuppoſe that he entered a *fourth* Time in the Service of the *Scape Goat*, which he preſented alive before the Lord, to make an Atonement with it. (See Dr. *Owen* on the Place.)

namely,

for *the Errors of the People.*

namely, the great Day of Atonement; when even *He* could not enter, with Acceptance, to fulfil his sacred Office there, without the Blood of the expiatory Sacrifices, which he had offered by slaying them before; and which Blood he went to present before the Lord, and sprinkle on the Mercy-Seat in the Sanctuary, first for his own Iniquities, as he was a Sinner like the rest of Mankind, and so needed a Sacrifice for the Remission of his own Sins, and to sanctify him to the Office of acting as a High Priest for the People; and then to make Atonement for all the Iniquities and Transgressions, (*Lev.* xvi. 21) not of the whole World, but of the whole Church of *Israel*, which were typical of the true *Israel* of God; whose Sins might be called their *Errors*, as they proceeded from Ignorance, through an erroneous Judgment and perverted Will; and as they thereby erred in Heart and Life from God's Ways. (*Psal.* xcv. 10.) All this plainly intimated that there is no Expiation of Sin, nor entering into the gracious Presence of God, and finding Acceptance with him, but by the atoning Blood of the great Sacrifice of Christ, which those Sacrifices typified, and by his Intercession in Virtue of that Blood.

8 The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the Way into the Holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first Tabernacle was yet standing.

8. By this Entrance of the High Priest alone into the Holy of Holies, and *that* only on one Day of the Year with atoning Blood, while all the common Priests, and all the People were denied this Privilege, the Holy Ghost, who by divine Suggestion directed *Moses* to make this Settlement of that Service, and indited the Scriptures which record it, evidently shew'd, (δηλοῦντος) that there was no Liberty of Access for them into that sacred Place, which contained the eminent Tokens of God's gracious Presence *; and that the Way of Believers free Access to the Throne of Grace in this World, and of their personal Entrance into Heaven itself, through Faith in the Blood of Christ, was not so clearly and openly revealed, as it now is under the Gospel-Dispensation, while the Frame of that first Tabernacle, with the Services pertaining to it, (which were afterwards also performed in the Temple) continued to be established and observed by divine Institution, as suited only to the typical State of the Church of *Israel*.

9 Which was *a Figure for the Time then present, in which were*

9. Which Tabernacle, with all its Furniture and Services, was, according to divine Institution, a Sort of parabolical (παραβολὴ εἰς τὸν καιρὸν) or imperfect figurative Representation of

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* Some think that by *the Holiest of all* is here meant the Holy of Holies in the first Tabernacle, which is called the Holiest of all, *ver.* 3. Others refer it to the immediate gracious Presence of God in Christ, the Tokens of which were there eminently exhibited in the Ark, the Cherubim of Glory, and the Mercy Seat, which are spoken of, *ver.* 4, 5. And others understand it of *Heaven* itself, which was typified by the Holy of Holies, and is, by way of Eminence, called *the Holy Place*, (*ver.* 12) and the *Holiest, into which* Believers have now *Boldness to enter by the Blood of Jesus*, (Chap. x. 19) And as 'tis difficult to say, which of these were precisely intended by the Apostle, we may with good Consistency take them all in.

offered both Gifts and Sacrifices, that could not make him that did the Service perfect, as pertaining to the Conscience.

good Things then to come †, (*Chap.* x. 1) until those Things themselves should be more thoroughly explained, and perfectly fulfilled, as they now are under the present Gospel-Dispensation; in which former Time, and in the Tabernacle then erected, various Offerings were presented to the Lord, (some of which were without Blood, and others, of a more directly propitiatory Nature, were slain Sacrifices) which, though they availed for the purifying of the Flesh from ceremonial Defilement, (*ver.* 13) and for taking off the *temporal* Punishment that *Israel*'s Sins exposed them to, as they were Members of the *civil* Community under God, as their *political* King ‖; yet they had not Worth or Virtue enough in themselves to atone for *moral Evil*, or to take away the Guilt of Sin, with respect to its Obligation to *eternal* Punishment, from any of the Worshippers (*Chap.* x. 1) that presented, or were concerned in those Sacrifices; nor were they sufficient to satisfy them that the Justice of God was effectually appeased, or to purge their Consciences from a disquieting and condemning Sense of Guilt, and of Obnoxiousness thereby to divine Wrath in the World to come: All the Use they had, with reference hereunto, was only to lead their Faith to the great and true propitiatory Sacrifice of Christ, which was typified, and pointed to, by these ceremonial Offerings;

10 Which stood *only in Meats and Drinks, and divers Washings, and carnal Ordinances, imposed* on them *until the Time of Reformation.*

10. Which, to perfect the Sacrifice, * were attended with only *Meat and Drink-Offerings*, and various Sorts of Washings of the Sacrifices, and of the Priests and People, and with almost numberless other ceremonial Rites, which may be called *carnal Ordinances*, as they sanctified only to the purifying of the Flesh, and were apt to raise gross Notions of spiritual Things in carnal Minds: And being insufficient to purify the Conscience, and to perfect the State of the Church, they were never design'd to be always continued in their Use; but were laid, as a Yoke of Bondage,

† The Word *then* is not in the Original, though our Translators have not distinguished it, as usual in such Cases, by putting it in a different Character; and therefore *the Time present* may by the Construction refer, either to the *former* Time of *the legal Services* in the Tabernacle, and afterwards in the Temple; or to the *present* Time of *the Gospel-State.*

‖ It appears from *Chap.* x. 1—6, that legal Offerings and Sacrifices were utterly insufficient to take away the *moral Guilt* of Sin, and the Punishment due for it, as committed against God, as *the Lord of Conscience* and supreme Law-giver and Judge of all. But they were fit and lively Types of the complete and perfect Atonement, which was made for that Purpose by the Sacrifice of Christ; because they were a *proper* Atonement for *political Guilt*, which was contracted by transgressing the Laws of the *Theocracy*, under the formal Notion of the Laws of God's *civil Government*, as the *King* of *Israel.* Accordingly, when any one had defrauded another of his *Property*, he was to restore it in *full Value*, and *bring his Trespass-Offering to the Lord:* Whereupon it was said, *the Priest shall make an Atonement for him before the Lord, and it shall be forgiven him, for any thing of all that he had done in trespassing therein.* (Lev. vi. 2—7.)

* *Which stood* is not in the Original; and therefore the Skill of the Critics has been much exercised to little Purpose in fixing the Connection, of this with the preceding Verse. But as *the Learned* know where to consult them, I shall not puzzle the common Reader with them, which would be to no Profit; but have given such a View of the Connection, as I take to be least forced, and most easy to be understood.

upon the People under the Law, (*Acts* xv. 10) only for a certain Season, till the Days of the Messiah, when all Things should be reduced to their proper Order and Regulation, for reforming all Defects in the Worship of God, and setting it up in a complete State of Spirituality and Holiness, Light and Grace, to his Glory and the Salvation of the Church.

11 *But Christ, being come an High Priest of good Things to come, by a greater and more perfect Tabernacle, not made with Hands, that is to say, not of this Building.*

11. But the Messiah who was all along promised and expected, as he that should come, (*Mat.* xi. 3) has now actually appeared in his incarnate State, as an High Priest, to accomplish the Services in the most effectual Manner, that were only shadowed out by those ceremonial Ordinances; and so to procure all the Blessings of the Gospel-State, which were then future Benefits, and all the Blessings of Glory, which are still to be enjoy'd in a better World to come. And this he has done, as having officiated in, and by means of, a much more noble and excellent Tabernacle than that, in which the legal Priests ministred, even in, and by his own human Body; (See the Note on *Chap.* viii. 2) which is greater, not indeed in Bulk and Measure, but in Worth and Dignity, and is every way better fitted for, and more perfectly answers the End of, his priestly Ministration, than that earthly Tabernacle possibly could; and which was not, like the Fabric of that Tabernacle, and afterwards of the Temple, made by the Skill and Workmanship of Men. (*Exod.* xxxi. 2—7, and xxxvi. 1, and 2 *Chron.* ii. 5, 6, 7.) No, this more excellent Tabernacle is not of human Structure, as all material Buildings are; but was formed by the immediate miraculous Power of the Holy Ghost, without the Operation of any Man whatsoever. (*Luke* i. 34, 35.)

12 *Neither by the Blood of Goats and Calves, but by his own Blood, he entered in once into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal Redemption* for us.

12. And *the Sacrifice* which he offered on Earth, and its Blood, by the Merit of which he entered into the Sanctuary above, are every way more excellent than those under the Law: For it was not by the Blood of Goats, Bulls or Calves, such as were offered for Atonement by the typical High Priest according to the Law, before their Blood was carried into the Holy of Holies; (*Lev.* xvi. 3—6) but it was in Virtue of his own most *precious Blood, as of a Lamb without Blemish and without Spot,* (1 Pet. i. 19) that he entered through the Vail of his own Flesh; (*Chap.* x 20) not, like the former High Priests, into an earthly Sanctuary on one Day of every Year; but, *once for all,* (Chap. x. 10) into the most holy Place, even Heaven itself, to present his own Person, together with the Merit of his perfect and ever available Sacrifice before, and so to appear for us in, the immediate Presence of God; (*ver.* 24, 25, 26) he having, antecedent thereunto, by the Sacrifice of himself, which he offered on the Cross, purchased, and so effectually obtained, by the Price of his own Blood, not merely a Year's Reprieve or Pardon, as was annually done in a figurative Way by the typical High Priest; but having found (εὑράμενος) a complete

complete and ever abiding Satisfaction to divine Justice, for the Forgiveness of all Trespasses, and an everlasting Deliverance from all the Bondage we were under to Sin, and Satan, and the Law, which bound us over to the Wrath of God; and having thereby procured a Right and Title to an eternal Inheritance of all Blessedness and Glory, which is included in the Redemption that he acquired for us, who believe in him.

13 *For if the Blood of Bulls, and of Goats, and the Ashes of an Heifer sprinkling the Unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the Flesh,*

13. For if the typical Blood of such mean worthless Animals, as *Bulls* and *Goats*, which were offered in Sacrifice by divine Appointment under the Law, and the Ashes of an Heifer, which was never yoked, and was consumed by Fire as a Sin-Offering; If these Ashes, mingled with running Water, being sprinkled upon Persons that were under any legal Defilement by the Dead, or by any other Means, are sufficient, according to the Institutions of the *Mosaic* Law, to cleanse those Persons from the external ceremonial Impurities of their Bodies, and to give them a Re-admission to public Worship in the Tabernacle, and into the Congregation of the Lord, from which they were excluded on account of such Defilement: (*Numb.* Chap. xix.)

14 *How much more shall the Blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without Spot to God, purge your Conscience from dead Works to serve the living God?*

14. How much more may we be assured that there is an Efficacy; yea, how much greater Virtue must there needs be, in the antitypical Blood of so glorious a one as Christ, God-Man, our High Priest and Sacrifice too, who offered, not Brute Animals, but himself, even his whole divinely dignified human Nature, without the least Flaw or moral Defilement in it, as an expiatory Sacrifice of a sweet smelling Savour to God; (*Ephes.* v. 2) and who did this, through the infinite Dignity and Support of his own immortal Deity, which, like the Altar, sanctified the Gift †; and through the anointing of the holy and eternal Spirit, which was given to him, as Man and Mediator, without Measure, and animated him to undergo all his Sufferings, with the utmost Readiness and Submission to his Father's Will, with an intire Trust and Confidence in him, with fervent Zeal for his Glory, and with the most amazing Love and Compassion to his People? How much more evidently and prevalently, I say, beyond all ceremonial Purifyings of the Flesh, shall the noble Blood, inclusive of all the Obedience and Sufferings unto Death, of such a divine Person, be efficacious, in the Application of it to your Consciences through Faith therein, to cleanse them from the Guilt and Defilement of all your Iniquities; which may be *dead Works*, as they proceed from spiritually dead Principles,

† By *the eternal Spirit* some understand *the divine Nature* of Christ; and others, *the Holy Spirit*, as some Copies read it. But it being hard to say which of these may be most directly intended; and his *divine Nature*, and the *Holy Spirit* being, in their respective Ways of Operation, very nearly concerned in this Offering of himself, the Paraphrase has taken in a Consideration of both.

are

are altogether unprofitable and abominable, like dead Carcaſes, and deſerve and tend unto eternal Death? And how much more effectual muſt it be, to free your Conſcience from dreadful Apprehenſions of Condemnation and Wrath on their Account; and to give it a holy Confidence toward God, as your reconciled God, that ye may worſhip him with Freedom and Delight, as the only living and true God, who will not accept of dead Peformances; and that ye may pay all cheerful Obedience to him here, as thoſe, who are pardoned and accepted of him through the atoning Death of his Son, till ye ſhall perfectly ſerve and enjoy him in the heavenly Sanctuary hereafter?

15 *And for this Cauſe he is the Mediator of the New Teſtament, that by means of Death, for the Redemption of the Tranſgreſſions* that were *under the firſt Teſtament, they which are called might receive the Promiſe of eternal Inheritance.*

15. And for bringing about this great End, Jeſus has undertaken, and is engaged in, the Office of the Mediator of the new and better Covenant, which has been ſpoken of; (*Chap.* viii. 6, 8. See the Notes there) and which carries the Nature of a *teſtamentary Diſpoſition* *, that by means, not of legal Sacrifices, but of his meritorious Death for the Remiſſion of Sin, and Deliverance of Sinners from the Guilt and Puniſhment of thoſe Iniquities, which were committed under the Old, as well as New Teſtament, they who are effectually called to the Faith of Chriſt, whether before or after his Death, might, in Virtue of it, be made Partakers of the great Promiſe to *Abraham*, that in his Seed all Nations of the Earth ſhould be bleſſed; (*Gen.* xxii. 18) which contained a Promiſe of all the Bleſſings of Grace and Glory, even unto the obtaining, not of a temporal Poſſeſſion, like the Land of *Canaan*, but of an everlaſting Inheritance of heavenly Happineſs, which was typified by that Land, and was promiſed in that Covenant to all his ſpiritual Seed. (*Gal.* iii. 18, 29.)

16 *For where a Teſtament is, there muſt alſo of Neceſſity be the Death of the Teſtator.*

16. And Jeſus being not only the Mediator of Reconciliation with God, to purchaſe the Bleſſings of the New-Covenant, and ratify it by his Blood; but being alſo a *Teſtator* to bequeath them, as Legacies in his laſt Will and Teſtament, (*Luke* xxii. 29, and *John* xiv. 27) his Bloodſhed, anſwerable to this Character, was to be unto *Death*: For in the very Nature and Reaſon of Things, and according to the univerſal Law and Cuſtom of all Nations, when

* Dr. *Owen* obſerves on this Text, that *the Seventy* conſtantly render the *Hebrew* Word (בְּרִית) by the *Greek* Word, (διαθήκη) which is here tranſlated *a Teſtament*, and at other Times *a Covenant*; that there is no other Word than *that* (בְּרִית) in the *Hebrew* Language to expreſs *a Teſtament* by; and that 'tis often uſed to expreſs a *free Promiſe*, which has more of the Nature of a *Teſtament*, than of a *proper Covenant*, and beſt agrees to the Nature of God's Covenant with Man. He further obſerves, that though the *Sinai*-Covenant, ſo far as it was a *Covenant*, was confirmed by the Blood of Sacrifices; yet as in thoſe Sacrifices *Death* was compriz'd, it was to confirm the teſtamentary Grant of the Inheritance of the Land of *Canaan*; for *Death* was neceſſary to the Confirmation of *a Teſtament*, which then could only be in Type and Repreſentation: The Teſtator himſelf was not to die for the Eſtabliſhment of a typical Inheritance; but Chriſt, as Mediator of the New Teſtament, was to die, not as the High Prieſts of Old did a natural Death for themſelves, but as the Sacrifice died, that was ſlain and offered for others. (See Page 339 and 407. See alſo our Note on *Chap.* vii. 22.)

any laſt Will or Teſtament is made, the Death of the Party, who therein diſpoſed of his own Goods, is neceſſary, and the Proof of it muſt be produced, (φέρεσθαι) to give it Effect, in order to its being executed. This is a plain Caſe.

17 For a Teſtament is of Force after Men are dead: Otherwiſe it is of no Strength at all whilſt the Teſtator liveth.

17 For as a Teſtament is the authentic Signification of Mens laſt Will, with regard to the Diſpoſal of their Property, in the Time, Way and Manner, which they appoint for it to take Place after their Deceaſe; ſo it is valid and pleadable, only after the Perſons that made it are dead; becauſe (ἐπεὶ) as long as the Teſtator himſelf is alive, the teſtamentary Diſpoſition is revocable at his Will and Pleaſure, and gives no legal Title to any one, that would pretend to claim or inherit under it: But when once he is dead, all its lawful Bequeſts to every Legatee are irrevocably eſtabliſhed, ſo as not to be altered or diſannulled. (*Gal.* iii. 15.) It was therefore neceſſary for Chriſt to *die*, as, for many other Reaſons, ſo particularly that the Promiſes of the Covenant, which he alſo made his Teſtamentary Gift, might be in full Force to all that claim by Faith under him: But he ſo far excels all human Teſtators, that as the Merit of his Death reached back to Old Teſtament Believers, (*ver.* 15) and as he never died in his whole Perſon; ſo he, as Man and Mediator, now lives in Heaven to take Care of the faithful Execution of his own Will, and gives the whole Inheritance of Grace and Glory to every Heir of Promiſe, without loſing his own Property in it, and without dividing the Inheritance, ſo as that one ſhould have one Part, and another, another Part; but that each may have the Whole, as if none but himſelf were to enjoy it.

18 Whereupon, neither the firſt Teſtament *was dedicated without Blood.*

18. This Manner of ratifying the Goſpel-Covenant is ſomewhat anſwerable to the Way, in which the *Sinai*-Covenant was conſecrated or ſolemnly ſeparated to ſacred Uſe, and became valid, as it was the Inſtrument whereby the Terms of that ſpecial Relation were ſettled, which God entered into with his People *Iſrael*; which Covenant was not eſtabliſhed without the Blood of the typical Sacrifices, that had been ſlain; much leſs could the New Covenant, which has more directly the Nature of a Teſtament, be confirmed and render'd authentic for taking Effect, without the Death and Blood-ſhed of Chriſt. (See the Note on *ver.* 15.)

19 For when Moſes had ſpoken every Precept to all the People according to the Law, he took the Blood of Calves and of Goats, with Water and ſcarlet Wool, and Hyſſop, and ſprinkled both the Book, and all the People,

19. And that the typical Blood was uſed for this, together with other Purpoſes of Purification and Remiſſion of Sins, appears from the various Sprinklings of it: For as *Moſes* was appointed of God, and accepted by the People, to be a Spokeſman, and Sort of Mediator, in all the Tranſactions that paſſed between God and them; (*Ex.* xx. 18, 19, and *Deut.* v. 22—28) ſo when he had recited all the Words of the Lord contained in the Moral-Law, which was written on two Tables of Stone, and all the Judgments (*Exod.* xxiv. 3) contained in the Inſtitutions, which peculiarly

peculiarly related to them as a Church and Nation, and had been specified just before; (*Chapters* xx—xxiii.) and when the People thereupon said, as *with one Voice, All the Words which the Lord hath said will we do*; (Exod. xxiv. 3) Then *Moses* wrote all the Words of the Law in a Book; (*ver.* 4, 7) And, in Testimony of its Ratification,* he took the Blood of Calves and of Goats, that had been offered for Burnt-Offerings and Peace-Offerings, and put it into Basons; (*Exod.* xxiv. 5, 6) and, having mixed the Blood with Spring-Water to make it fluid, he took a Parcel of Scarlet Wool to imbibe the Liquor, and a Bunch of Hyssop to disperse it in Drops; and by this means he sprinkled one Half of it on the Book of the Law, as it lay upon the Altar, to consecrate it to sacred Use, as containing the

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* Several Things are mentioned in this Verse, that are not found in the Account given of the Dedication of the Covenant. *Ex.* xxiv. 3—8. But, as the Apostle wrote by divine Inspiration, we may be sure of the Truth of what he asserts concerning them, in which he don't confine himself to what was recorded on that particular Occasion; but takes in various Things, that suited his Purpose, relating to the Use of sprinkling the Blood of the Sacrifices, wherever they are to be met with in the Law of *Moses*; and gives such an Account of them, as was proper to explain them.—We only read in *Ex.* xxiv. 5, of the *offering of Burnt-Offerings, and Peace-Offerings of Oxen*; these Oxen the Apostle calls *Calves*, the Word (פרים) in the *Hebrew* signifying any Cattle *of the Herd*, whether young or old, and the *Greek* Word, (μοσχων) used by the Apostle, might have been render'd *Heifers*; and as we are not told in the History what all the Offerings on that Occasion were, there is no Difficulty in allowing that there were *Goats*, as well as *Bullocks*, since *Goats* are mentioned among the Peace Offerings made by Fire, and the Sin-Offerings, whose Blood was sprinkled. (*Lev.* iii. 3, 12, and ix. 15, 18, and xvi. 15—19.) And though sprinkling the Blood with *Water* and *Scarlet Wool* and *Hyssop* is not recorded in the Account of the Dedication of the Covenant, but only the sprinkling of the Blood, which was put into Basons for that Purpose; (*Ex.* xxiv. 6, 8) yet as when the Blood was sprinkled in lesser Quantities, it was easily done by dipping the Finger into it; (*Lev.* viii. 15, and xvi. 14) so when greater Quantities were to be sprinkled, it was mixed with Running, or Spring-Water, to prevent its congealing, and keep it liquid: And that it might be scattered in Drops, it was sprinkled with an Instrument composed of scarlet Wool, to take up and retain a sufficient Portion of the Blood, and a Bunch of Hyssop to scatter it. This is called taking *Hyssop and Scarlet*, (which the Apostle interprets as meant of *scarlet Wool*) *and dipping them in Blood* and running Water, and *sprinkling a House* infected with the Leprosy *for its cleansing*: (Lev. xiv. 51, 52.)—And though *sprinkling the Book* is not expressed in the History, but only *sprinkling the Altar and the People*; (Ex. xxiv. 7, 8) yet as the Apostle tells us that *Moses* sprinkled the Book, and the History speaks of his having *read and wrote all the Words of the Law*, and then *sprinkled the Blood on the Altar*, (ver. 3. 4. 6) there's no just Reason to doubt, but that the Book was laid upon the Altar, before the Altar was sprinkled; and so *the Book* was sprinkled together with it. And whereas in the Text of *Ex.* xxiv. 8, *Moses* is said to have sprinkled the Blood *on the People*, the Apostle tells us, by way of Interpretation, that it was *upon all the People*, either in their *Representatives*, which some suppose were the *twelve Pillars*, according to the twelve Tribes of *Israel*, mentioned *Exod.* xxiv. 4; or the *Seventy Elders*, mentioned ver. 1, who were the chief Heads of *Israel*; or else upon as many of the People, as were near him; and, perhaps, upon every Individual of them, as there might be Opportunity for it in their Turns, even *upon all the Men, Women and Children*, who were included in the Covenant made with *Israel at Sinai*, Deut. xxxi. 11, 12, 13, as they had also been *before* in the Covenant made with *Abraham*, Gen. xvii. 7—10, in which the Females were included in the Males.—Dr. *Owen*, in a Remark on the Verse before us, says, "The Communication of the Benefits of the Death of Christ, unto Sanctification, is called *the sprinkling of his Blood*, 1 Pet. i. 2; and our Apostle comprizes all the Effects of it, unto that End, under the Name of the *Blood of Sprinkling*, Chap. xii. 24. And I fear (says he) that those who have used the Expression with some Contempt, when applied by themselves unto the Sign of the Communication of the Benefit of the Death of Christ in Baptism, have not observed that Reverence of holy Things, that is required of us. For this *Symbol of Sprinkling* was that, which God himself chose and appointed, as a meet and apt Token of the Communication of Covenant-Mercy, that is, of his Grace in Christ Jesus to our Souls."

Covenant, in which God was one Party; and ſprinkled the other Half upon the whole Congregation of the People, or at leaſt upon their Repreſentatives, as the other Party concerned in that Covenant, and thereby purified them from all their legal Uncleanneſs, and ratified the Covenant between God and them; Which carried a typical Intimation, that the new Covenant of Goſpel-Grace, between God and all true Believers, ſhould be confirmed by the Blood of Chriſt's Sacrifice, which is, by way of Eminence, the *Blood of ſprinkling*, (Chap. xii. 24) and the Virtue of which, in its Application, is effectual for cleanſing from the Guilt and Defilement of Sin, by pardoning and ſanctifying Grace, as was typified by *that* Blood and Water, and was afterward ſignified by the Blood and Water, which came out of Chriſt's pierced Side. (*John* xix. 34, 35. See the Note there.)

20 *Saying, This is the Blood of the Teſtament, which God hath enjoined unto you.*

20. While *Moſes* was in this Manner ſprinkling the Blood, and ſhowing it to the People, he ſaid to them, (*Ex.* xxiv. 8) *Behold the Blood of the Covenant.* (i. e) This Blood is a Token of its Confirmation by divine Authority, between God and you, whereby his Faithfulneſs, on one Hand, for fulfilling his Promiſes; and your Obedience, on the other, for performing its Duties, are engaged, according to what I have publiſhed unto you from the Lord, and ye have conſented to, that ye may be dealt with according to its Tenor.

21 *Moreover, he ſprinkled likewiſe with*

21. Furthermore, when the Tabernacle was framed and furniſhed with its appointed Veſſels of Service,† *Moſes* alſo ordered

† *The Tabernacle* was not erected, nor all its Veſſels formed, till ſome Time after *Moſes* received the Law, and the forementioned ſolemn Tranſactions had paſſed: And therefore the ſprinkling of Blood to ſanctify the Tabernacle and its Utenſils could not be at that Time; but muſt relate to what was afterward to be done, probably at the firſt ſetting up of the Tabernacle; ſince *Moſes*, giving an Account of *that*, (Ex. xl. 9, 10, 11) order'd the *Tabernacle, and all Things therein to be hallowed with anointing Oil*; after which follows the Conſecration of *Aaron* and his Sons by anointing them: (*ver.* 12—15) And as the anointing of them for their Conſecration was attended with the ſprinkling of Blood, according to the Order about it in *Ex.* xxviii. 4, compared with *Chap.* xxix. 20, 29, It is reaſonable to conclude, that the anointing of the Tabernacle, and all its Veſſels, were ſo too; and *Joſephus* ſays, (*Antiq.* Lib. III. Cap. 8. *Hudſ.* Edit.) that *Moſes* conſecrated the Tabernacle and all its Veſſels, by *anointing them with Oil, and by the Blood of ſlain Bulls and Rams.*—However, I rather think, with Dr. *Owen* and ſome others, that the Apoſtle here refers to what was *annually* done by the High Prieſt on the great Day of Atonement: For his principal Deſign in this Diſcourſe, as appears from what follows to the End of the Chapter, was to run the Compariſon between Chriſt's Performances in the Execution of his Office *in Heaven*, and the Services of the High Prieſt *in the Sanctuary* on that Day. And though *Moſes* did not ſprinkle the Tabernacle and the Veſſels with his own Hands, on the anniverſary Day of Atonement; yet it may be ſpoken of as *his doing it*; becauſe it was done by the High Prieſt, according to divine Appointment in the Law delivered by *him*: For *Moſes* often ſignifies *his Law*, as in *Luke* xxiv. 27, 44, *Acts* xv. 21, and 2 *Cor.* iii. 15. And ſo the Apoſtle, having finiſhed his Account of what was done at the Dedication of the Covenant, proceeds in this and the next Verſe to other ſtanding Ordinances of ſprinkling the Blood of Sacrifices for Purification and Atonement, the more fully to ſhew, how they ſhadowed out the Virtue of Chriſt's atoning Blood for taking away Sin; which he inſiſts upon at large in the next Chapter. And that he in this Verſe ſpeaks of Things done at a *different Time* from thoſe, which were juſt before mentioned, is ſuggeſted by the Way of his introducing it, ſaying, *Moreover, likewiſe he ſprinkled with Blood the Tabernacle*, &c. And then, in the next

Blood both the Tabernacle and all the Vessels of the Ministry.

ordered that it should be sprinkled with the Blood of the Sacrifices, and that this should be repeatedly done on the great Day of Atonement every Year; and that, together with the Tabernacle, all the Utensils pertaining to it, and to the Ministrations of the Priests in it, should be thereby cleansed from the Defilements of the People, and sanctified for religious Services; even as the Mercy-Seat, and Altar of Incense, annually were by the High Priest on every Return of that Day, because of the Sins of the People, that they might be purified from the legal Uncleanness, which had been contracted thereby. (*Lev.* xvi. 14—19)

22 And almost all Things are by the Law purged with Blood; and without shedding of Blood is no Remission.

22. And so important was the Blood of Sacrifices to that Dispensation, that almost every Thing, relating to Purification, and indeed all Things, except those that were to be purified by Fire and Water,* and had no *moral* Impurity in them, are cleansed, according to the Institution of the Law, by the offering and sprinkling of typical Blood: And, even by the Tenor of the *Sinai*-Covenant, there is no such Thing as Forgiveness of Sin to be obtained without the Blood-shed of atoning Sacrifices; which evidently typified, and strongly pointed to the Blood of Jesus Christ for effectually cleansing us from all Sin; (1 *John* i. 7) and intimate that there can be no real Purgation from Sin without his Blood.

23 It was therefore necessary that the Patterns of Things in the Heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly Things themselves with better Sacrifices than these.

23. It therefore plainly appears from what has been said, that, by the Appointment and Commandment of God, it was necessary that, not only the Book of the Covenant, and the People; but also that the Tabernacle and all its Utensils, which were figurative Representations of Heaven, and of the Blessings pertaining to it, according to the Model or Delineations, (ὑποδείγματα) that were shewn to *Moses* in the Mount, (See the Note on *Chap.* viii. 5) should be cleansed and set apart for sacred Use by the typical Sacrifices and various Sprinklings but now mentioned; insomuch that the High Priest was never to enter into the Holy of Holies without the Blood of those Sacrifices. But as the heavenly Things themselves are incomparably more excellent than these Patterns of them; so it was necessary, according to the infinite Wisdom, Holiness, and sovereign Will and Appointment of God, answerable to these figurative Representations, that

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next Verse, he says, *Almost all Things are by the Law purged with Blood, and without shedding of Blood is no Remission*; thereby intimating what was the ordinary continued Practice all along under the Law.

* Every thing that might abide the Fire was indeed to pass through Fire for cleansing, and to be purified with the Water of Separation, *Numb.* xxxi. 23; and both the Cloaths and Bodies of those, who led away the *Scape-Goat*, and who burnt the Sin-Offerings, were to be washed with *Water*; and so was the Flesh of those, who had touched such Things as were *ceremonially* unclean. (*Lev.* xvi. 26—28, and xxii. 6.) But as there was no *moral* Defilement in any of those Things; so the Apostle, not reckoning them to his Purpose, passes them over and says, with a tacit Exception of such like Things, that ALMOST *all Things were by the Law purged with Blood.*

the heavenly Sanctuary itself, and every thing relative to it, should be consecrated to holy Use for sinful Creatures *, by a proportionably more noble, excellent and worthy Sacrifice, than all that were offered under the Law, that in Virtue of this great Sacrifice, not only the new Covenant between God and his People might be confirmed, and they cleansed from all Iniquity; but that Jesus, their High Priest himself, might also be fully consecrated to his Office, (*John* xvii. 19) and enter into Heaven itself to present his Blood before the Throne of God; (*Heb.* ix. 12) and might prepare that holy Habitation for their Use and Enjoyment, who in due Season were to follow him thither. (*John* xiv. 2, 3.)

24 *For Christ is not entered into the holy Places made with Hands,* which are *the Figures of the true; but into Heaven itself, now to appear in the Presence of God for us:*

24. For Christ, the anointed High Priest of the Church, has not entered, like the High Priest of old, into such earthly Places, as were framed by the Hands of Men, and were no more than mere Figures and Resemblances of the *heavenly Sanctuary, and true Tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not Man,* (Chap. viii. 2) and the Model of which was given to *Moses* on the Mount: (*Chap.* viii. 5.) † But he is ascended in his human Nature with the Blood of his Sacrifice into Heaven itself, even the Heaven of Heavens, now in, and by means of that Nature, and in that Holiest of all, to fulfil the Remainder of his priestly Office, by appearing in the immediate Presence of God's Glory, as our Representative, to present before him, as on a Throne of Grace, the Merit of his Blood in his *ever living to make Intercession for us, who come unto God by him.* (Chap. vii. 25.)

25 *Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the High Priest entereth into the holy Place every Year with Blood of others:*

25. Not that we are to imagine as if, in order to his entering into this heavenly Sanctuary, and presenting his atoning Blood there, it was necessary for him to offer himself a Sacrifice, as he did on the Cross in suffering unto Death, more than once, which alone was completely satisfactory to divine Justice; or that he should frequently repeat it, as, according to the *Jewish* Institution, the High Priest offered Sacrifices, because of their Imperfection, every Year,

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* *Better Sacrifices* is here put, by an Analogy of Number, for *a better Sacrifice,* in an *Antithesis* to the legal Sacrifices; because this is more eminent in its Virtue than, and includes the Signification of, all those Sacrifices: For 'tis only *the one Sacrifice* of Christ that is intended, as appears from the following Verses, where the Apostle speaks of it, as *but once offered,* and as completely sufficient alone, and of itself, to answer its End.

† *Holy Places,* in the *plural* Number, seem to me to signify the intire Building of the Tabernacle, inclusive of the Court of the Priests, and of the Holy of Holies, into which the High Priest passed thro' the Vail: And Christ's entering, in Opposition thereunto, into Heaven itself, may intimate that, through the Offering of himself, he ministers *in his human Nature,* prefigured by *the Tabernacle,* and *in Heaven,* prefigured by the *Sanctuary,* according to what has been observed about the Distinction between the Sanctuary and Tabernacle. (See the Note on *Chap.* viii. 2.) And though the Word (*ἀντίτυπα*) render'd *the Figures,* is most commonly understood to signify that, which answers the Type; yet it here evidently means the same Thing with *the Patterns* mentioned in the preceding Verse, which represented the Things signified by them, answerable to the perfect Platform that was given of them to *Moses* in the Mount. (See the Paraphrase and Note on *Chap.* viii. 5, and Dr. *Owen* on this Verse.)

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in order to his entering into the worldly Sanctuary, not with his own Blood, but with the Blood of other Creatures, mere Animals, that could never take away our Sins, which render'd us unworthy and unmeet to be admitted into God's immediate Presence in Heaven.

26 For then must he often have suffered since the Foundation of the World: But now once in the End of the World, hath he appeared to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself.

26. For if there had been a Necessity of a Repetition of his Offering, as there was of those under the Law, because of their Imperfection; then he must have shed his Blood for making Atonement very often from the Time that Sin entered into the World, * which was soon after the Foundation of the Earth was laid; since, otherwise, there could have been no Expiation by his Blood for the Sins of those that lived in former Ages: But such is the infinite Virtue, Perfection and Dignity of the excellent Sacrifice which Christ has offered, and such is the Extent of its Efficacy backwards and forward, to all former as well as future Generations, that now, at the Close of the *Jewish* Dispensation to put an End to *that*, and at the Introduction of the Gospel-Dispensation to establish *this*, which is the last and best of all that ever will be set up in our World; (See the Note on *Chap*. i. 2. and Mr. *Joseph Mede*'s Apostacy, &c. *Chapters* xi. and xii.) He at this Time, once for all, (πεφανέρωται) has been manifested in the Flesh to expiate the Guilt, and (εἰς ἀθέτησιν) abolish the Power of Sin, with all its dreadful Effects, by his meritorious Sufferings unto Death, when he offered a Sacrifice, not of Bulls and Goats, but of himself, whose intire human Nature, Soul as well as Body, and *that* dignified by the personally united Godhead, was the Offering he made for Sin; and so was of such infinite Value, as not to need a Repetition of it, or any other propitiatory Sacrifice besides it.

27 And as it is appointed unto Men once to die; but after this the Judgment:

27. And in as much as, by the settled Law and righteous Appointment of God, upon the Entrance of Sin, for the Punishment of it, all Mankind, in the ordinary Course of Things, † must die once, and but once out of this mortal State, never to return to it more; and, after that, must appear at the awful Bar of a future Judgment, to be dealt with according to the Demerit of their Deeds done in the Body; unless they be relieved by Grace:

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* As there was no need of any expiatory Sacrifice, till Sin invaded human Nature; so *since the Foundation of the World* in this Place must be understood to mean, not absolutely from the Creation of the World, but from the Fall of *Adam*, which was quickly after it; and thus this Phrase is to be understood, *Luke* xi. 50.

† Though *all Men in general* must die, and come to Judgment, according to the penal Sentence; yet as there was an Exemption from dying, by the special Favour of God on Christ's Account, in the Case of *Enoch* and *Elias*; so there will be of those, that shall be alive on Earth at Christ's second coming; 1 *Thess*. iv. 17. And though in the common Course Believers must die, and all of them must appear in Judgment, as well as others; yet the *Sting* of Death, and the *Rigour* of proceeding against them, and the *condemning Sentence* that shall be passed upon others, will be taken off from them, through the Merit of Christ, who will appear, as the Judge of all, to their Salvation.

28. So

28 So Christ was once offered to bear the Sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second Time without Sin unto Salvation.

28. So Christ, to take off *the Curse* of the Law-Sentence for Sin, died once, and but once, † and thereby offered one only Sacrifice to bear the Guilt and Punishment of the Sins of his People, who may well be called *many*, as they are an innumerable Multitude, even all that believe in him. And unto them, who with Faith, Hope, Desire and Love, expect his coming again to Judgment, and patiently wait for it, looking for Salvation alone by him, he will personally appear at what may be called, by Way of Eminence, the *second Time*, not as he did before, in a State of Humiliation and Suffering for their Sins; but in all his Majesty and Glory, as no longer bearing their Iniquities, but coming to give them a complete Enjoyment of all the Happiness of the heavenly World, to which he will adjudge them, Soul and Body, at the last Day, as the Fruit and Effect of what by his Death he has obtained for them.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How gradually has God made known his Mind and Will about the great Things, that relate to Christ, and Salvation by him! These were obscurely hinted in typical Representations, by the earthly Tabernacle and its various Utensils, and Services; but are brought to clear Light by Gospel-Revelation, that we may behold in Christ far more transcendent Glories, than ever appeared in those Shadows, which were to be fulfill'd in him. May we be led to this grand Antitype for all the Light and Grace, Pardon of Sin, Communion with God, and spiritual Food for our Souls, that were typify'd by those legal Institutions, which could make nothing perfect, as pertaining to the Conscience!—What a consummate and glorious High Priest is Christ! All of that Character under the Law were only Figures of him; but he, as our Gospel-High Priest, ministers in the most excellent Tabernacle of his own human Nature, and in Heaven itself; and has entered, once for all, into that most holy Place, there to abide for ever, in Virtue of his own Blood, by which he obtained eternal Redemption for us. With what Satisfaction may we depend upon the Efficacy of his Blood, without which there is no Remission! If sprinkling the Blood of Animals, and the Ashes of an Heifer availed for ceremonial Purifications of the Body; How much more must the precious Blood of Christ, who offered himself to God, as an immaculate and divinely dignified Lamb, purge our Souls from the Guilt, Defilement and Power of Sin, in its Application to them? O blessed Time of Reformation! The Gospel-Covenant relating hereunto is sure and certain: Whether we consider it as the Covenant of God the Father with his People in Christ, or as Christ's Testamentary Bequest, all its Promises are ratified past Repeal; and all its Blessings, unto the Remission of Sin, and the Inheritance of eternal Life, may be claim'd, and shall be enjoy'd by them, that are effectually called in every Age. But how necessary is our Lord's intercessory Presentation of his Sacrifice in Heaven, and Application of it to our Souls on Earth, to render it efficacious to our own Salvation!—All Mankind in the general Course of Things must, by Divine Appointment, unavoidably die, and come to Judgment; but, blessed be God, that every true Believer has a happy Relief against the Terror of these Thoughts: For to them who look, and wait in a suitable Manner, for Christ's second Coming, He will appear in all his Glory to adjudge them to, and give them Possession of, all possible Happiness, in Soul and Body for ever, on Account of the one Offering he has made of himself for them.

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† *Christ's being once offer'd to bear the Sins of many*, evidently answers to its being *appointed unto Men once to die*; (ver. 27) and shews that the offering of his propitiatory Sacrifice was, strictly speaking, on the Cross, and not in Heaven; and shews that this *one Offering*, (which, in Opposition to his suffering *often*, (ver. 26) is called *his appearing once in the End of the World, to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself*) is intended all along in the foregoing Context; it being inconsistent with his State in Heaven to continue under Sufferings; and the Presentation of the Blood of his Sacrifice there, being an ever-continuing Exhibition of the same, cannot be properly said to be *but once*.

CHAP. X.

The Apostle shuts up his main Argument relating to the Insufficiency of all legal Sacrifices for taking away Sin, 1—4. *And to the Necessity and Efficacy of the Sacrifice of Christ for that Purpose, according to the Tenor of the new Covenant, which contains the substantial Blessings, that the Law was only the Shadow of,* 5—18. *And, having finished the* Doctrinal, *he enters on the* Practical *Part of the Epistle, by Way of Inference from the preceding Discourse, from which he draws an Argument for holy Boldness in the Believer's Access to God through Jesus Christ,* 19—22. *And for Stedfastness in the Faith, and Excitations to mutual Love and Duty, and to frequent Assemblings together for religious Worship,* 23—25. *And then he warns them of the Danger of Apostacy,* 26—31. *Reminds them of their former Illumination, and Sufferings with Patience and spiritual Joy,* 32—34. *And encourages them to maintain their holy Profession to the End of their Days,* 35—39.

TEXT.

1 FOR *the Law having a Shadow of good Things to come,* and *not the very Image of the Things, can never with those Sacrifices which they offered Year by Year continually, make the Comers thereunto perfect.*

2 *For then would they not have ceased to be offered; because that the Worshippers once purged, should*

PARAPHRASE.

1. IT evidently appears then from all that hath been insisted on in the foregoing Discourse, that the *Mosaic* Law, with all its Institutions of the levitical Priesthood, and Sacrifices, whose Blood was carried into the Holy of Holies, was only a typical Representation of Christ and his Sacrifice offered on Earth, and of his entering with his own Blood into Heaven, to present the Merit of it there, as the Purchase of all the substantial Privileges and Blessings, which were then future, and to be introduced under the Gospel-State: Yea, it was so far from containing the Substance of those eminently good Things themselves, that it was rather like the imperfect Representation, which the mere Shadow of a Man's Body makes of him, than like his Image in a Looking-Glass, which gives a more distinct View of him. (See the Note on 2 *Cor.* iii. 18.) And therefore the Law, with all those figurative Sacrifices, which, because of their Imperfection, the High Priest offered repeatedly every Year, on the great Day of Atonement, can never be effectual to discharge them from the Guilt of Sin, and bring them into a State of Reconciliation and Acceptance with God, that are concerned in, and attend upon those ceremonial Services, and approach the divine Majesty by those Sacrifices; nor can they ever make them perfect, as pertaining to the Conscience (*Chap.* ix. 9. See the Note there.)

2. For had these Ends been perfectly obtained by those Sacrifices, Is it not plain that God would never have appointed, and that there would have been no Occasion for frequent, or indeed for any Repetition of them, after they were first offered? They then would certainly have ceased to

have had no more Conscience of Sins.

to be offered any more; because, on Suppofition that the Worfhippers, to whom thofe Sacrifices related, were really and completely cleanfed thereby at once from their Guilt, and had obtained Acceptance with God to eternal Life, they would have had no perplexing and diftreffing Self-Condemnings in their Confciences, as if, for want of a further Atonement, they were ftill in an unpardon'd State, or needed fome other Sacrifice to purify and difcharge them from the Guilt of their Sins before God; which if it were once perfectly done, would have been done for ever.

3 *But in thofe* Sacrifices there is *a Remembrance again* made *of Sins every Year.*

3. But this was fo far from being their Cafe, that in the very offering of thofe legal Sacrifices at returning Seafons, there was every Year, on the great Day of Atonement, a folemn *public Confeffion*, made by the High Prieft, of all the Sins of *Ifrael*, and they were to *afflict their Souls* for them, (*Lev.* xvi. 21, 22, 29, 31.) which brought their Sins to a painful Remembrance, and plainly fhows that their former Sacrifices had not perfectly atoned for them, as indeed in the Nature of Things they could not.

4 *For it is not poffible that the Blood of Bulls and of Goats fhould take away Sins.*

4. For there is fuch an infinite Difproportion between thofe little worthlefs Sacrifices, and the Demerit of Sin, and the high Demands of God's Law and Juftice to make Satisfaction for it, and to demonftrate his abfolute Deteftation of it, as committed againft his infinite Majefty, Crown and Dignity, that it is really impoffible for the Blood of fuch mean Animals, as Bulls and Goats, to have Virtue enough in themfelves, or to be deemed, according to any Rules of Wifdom or Juftice, a fufficient Offering to make a true, proper and effectual Atonement for Sin; they could only be defigned of God to prefigure that all-fufficient Sacrifice of Chrift, which alone has Worth and Efficacy in itfelf, to anfwer this great End.

5 *Wherefore, when he cometh into the World, he faith, Sacrifice and Offering thou wouldeft not, but a Body haft thou prepared me.*

5. Since therefore there was fuch an abfolute Defect in thofe legal Sacrifices to anfwer this important Purpofe; When our bleffed Lord fpake with a Reference to his coming into this lower World, (*Pf.* xl. 6, 7, 8.) and when he actually came into his incarnate State for executing his prieftly Office, he faid to God his Father, Thou wouldft not accept of legal Sacrifices and Offerings of any Kind, as a proper Expiation for Sin; they being of too little Value to fatisfy thy Law and Juftice for it: But, that an Offering equal to the Offence might be made to thee, Thou in thy infinite Wifdom and good Pleafure, and in Mercy to thy Church, haft by an extraordinary Operation of the Holy Ghoft, prepared a true human Body, * animated with a human Soul, and

* The Words in the *Hebrew* of *Pf.* xl. 6, from whence this Paffage is quoted, are, *Mine Ear haft thou bored.* Various have been the Conjectures of the Learned to reconcile the Difference between thefe Words and the Apoftle's Expreffion, *A Body haft thou prepared me*, which agrees with the Tranflation that *the Seventy* have given of them. But what, upon the Whole, appears to me to be the moft natural

and so formed a proper human Nature for me, that I thy eternal Son, might personally unite it to myself, and thereby dignify it with infinite Worth to render it available for a complete Atonement.

6 *In Burnt-Offerings and* Sacrifices *for Sin thou hast had no Pleasure.*

6. Thou couldst not approve of, or acquiesce, or take Pleasure in any of the Sacrifices under the Law; no, not of the most eminent of them, such as Burnt-Offerings and Sacrifices for Sin: Thou neither didst intend or desire any of these, nor take the least Complacency and Rest in them, as if they were answerable to the Demands of thy Law and Justice, or worthy of thy Wisdom and Holiness to accept, or were in themselves of sufficient Virtue to take away Sin.

7 *Then said I, Lo, I come (In the Volume of the Book it is written of me) to do thy Will, O God.*

7. When this was the State of the Case, then, according to what is recorded concerning me at the Head of the Roll of Eternity, * and of Scripture-Prophecy, relating to the Sacrifice that thou wouldst accept, I presented myself to thee, as ready to do what all those Sacrifices could not, saying, Behold, I cheerfully come into a State of Incarnation at thy Call, to fulfil thy Purposes of Grace, and my Covenant-Engagements to thee, and all the Prophecies and Promises concerning me; and to perform the good Pleasure of thy Will in doing thy Work, and particularly in suffering unto Death whatsoever thou, O God my Father, requirest for the Honour of thy Law and Justice, and for making a proper and complete Satisfaction for Sin.

8 *Above, when he said, Sacrifice, and Offering, and Burnt-Offerings, and* offering *for Sin thou wouldest*

8. When in the above-cited Place our Lord said, Thou wouldst not accept of any Kind of Sacrifice and Offering; no, not of any Burnt-Offering and Offering for Sin, as an effectual Atonement; nor hadst thou the least Complacency of Rest in that Consideration of any of them, which are

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ral and easy Way of accounting for this Difference is, that our Author designed to give *the Sense* of this Clause, as he also does of some following Passages, rather than to *recite the Words of the Seventy*; it being questionable whether that Translation has not been altered in some Places from the New Testament, and it being unlikely that the Apostle should ever quote it, especially to the *Hebrews*, and where it is wrong. (See Dr. *Owen* on the Place.) Accordingly some think that there is an Allusion to the boring of a Servant's Ear through with an Awl, who was to serve his Master for ever. (*Exod.* xxi. 5, 6.) But others, observing that the *Hebrew* Word there used is different from that in *Ps.* xl. 6, understand it of God's fitting Christ with a Body, of which *the Ear* is, by a Synechdoche, put for the *Whole*, because it is by the Ear that Men hear and listen to him, whom they are to obey; in Allusion to which Christ says, *The Lord God has opened mine Ear, and I was not rebellious,* &c. (*Isa.* l. 5.) And, by a like Synechdoche, the *Ear* may be put for *the Whole* of Christ's *Human Nature*, Soul and Body, which he came to offer as a Sacrifice for Sin, and is called his offering *himself*. (See *Isa.* liii. 10. *Mark* xiv. 34. *Eph.* v. 2, and *Heb.* ix. 14.)

* *The Volume of the Book* has been greatly criticised upon by the Learned; and as the Books of the Antients were commonly Rolls of Parchment, from whence they were called *Volumes*, some have thought that the *Volume of the Roll* is a *Tautology* without Sense: But as the Word, ([illegible]) rendered a *Volume*, signifies also the *Head*, it might be, perhaps, better rendered *the Head of the Book*; and so may refer either to the first and principal Article in the Roll of Eternity, or *Book of Life*, which contained Christ's Engagement to the Father; or to the *first Promise* of the *Seed of the Woman to bruise the Serpent's Head*, which stands at the Head or Beginning of the first Volume or Book of Scripture, *Gen.* iii. 15; or may refer to the *former Part of the Old Testament*, which speaks of Sacrifices in their typical Reference to the Sacrifice of Christ.

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not; neither hadst Pleasure therein *(which are offered by the Law)*

offered, according to thine Appointment in the *Mosaic* Law;

9 *Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy Will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.*

9. Then, in Reflection upon the utter Insufficiency of those Sacrifices, he said, Behold, O God of Righteousness and Salvation, here am I; Take the Satisfaction, thy Justice demands from me; I freely come to put myself in the Sinner's Stead, to bear his Curse, and to answer the utmost of thy Requirements, according to what thou thyself has appointed, and dost approve of and delight in, to open a Way for the Remission of Sin. Now, by our Lord's saying this, he manifestly shows that the former Appointment or Declaration of God's Will, with regard to the first Covenant, and all its Offerings, were to be no longer in Force, that he might confirm and give Effect to this last-mentioned Will, with respect to the new Covenant, and the Sacrifice which he himself came to offer for giving it an everlasting Establishment.

10 *By the which Will we are sanctified, through the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once* for all.

10. By which Will of God, as fulfilled by Christ, (*ver.* 9.) we, who believe in him, are not in a typical and ceremonial Way, as *Israel* were by the Sacrifices under the Law, but really and effectually purged from the Guilt and Defilement of our Sins; and are dedicated to God, and purified as a peculiar People for his Service, through the Merit and Virtue of the sacrificial Offering of Christ's human Nature, (See the Note on *ver.* 5.) of which the Body is the visible Part, answering to the Bodies of the Beasts that were slain: Which Offering he made, not with any Repetition of it, like those under the Law, but only once, and *that* for ever; it being in itself absolutely perfect, and available for making a complete Atonement at once. (See the Note on *Chap.* ix. 28.) And herein lies an eminent and remarkable Difference between all the former Priests and their Sacrifices, and Jesus, our great High Priest and his Sacrifice.

11 *And every Priest standeth daily ministring and offering oftentimes the same Sacrifices, which can never take away Sins.*

11. Every legal Priest, in Token of humble Reverence, as well as of Readiness to engage in the Service of God, * *stands* before him, frequently officiating in his Ministrations, and offering the same Sort of animal Sacrifices according to his Station; none of which repeated Sacrifices, whether daily or annual, can ever make a proper Expiation to the Satisfaction of Divine Justice for *any*, much less for *all Manner* of Sins.

12 *But this Man, after he had offered*

12. But so incomparably superior is the Dignity of Christ's Person and Sacrifice, above them and theirs, that

* *Every Priest stands daily ministring* seems in this Place to denote the Posture of humble Service and Reverence, with which the Priests performed their Ministrations; in Opposition to which Christ is represented, in the present Execution of his Office, as *sitting down* with Grandeur and Authority *on the Right Hand of God.* (ver. 12.) And as the Word *daily* (καθ' ἡμέραν) is used with Reference to the High Priest's offering up Sacrifices *once a Year,* (Chap. vii. 27. See the Note there) we may very well understand it here as relating to his offering on that Day, though not to the Exclusion of the Ministrations of the ordinary Priests *every Day*; and so all legal Sacrifices, whether daily or annual, are represented as utterly insufficient to take away Sin.

this

one Sacrifice for Sins, for ever sat down on the Right Hand of God;

this* Gospel-High-Priest, after he had once offered himself, as the one only atoning Sacrifice for all the Sins of his People, immediately, upon his finishing that Part of his Office, rose from the Dead to immortal Honour, that he might live, and exercise his Office, in an endless State of the highest Dignity, Rest and Authority, which may be figuratively represented by his eternally *sitting down* with Majesty, Glory and Acceptation at God the Father's Right Hand; (See the Note on *Acts* vii. 55.)

13 *From henceforth expecting till his Enemies be made his Footstool.*

13. From that Time forward, exercising all Power in Heaven and Earth, till, according to the Promise of his Father, (*Ps.* cx. 1.) and his own just Expectation on that Foot, and on Account of his meritorious Performances, Sin, Satan, the World and Death; yea, all the Adversaries to his Person and Authority, People and Cause, shall be actually and universally subdued, like such vanquished, despicable Enemies, as are trampled under the Feet of the Conqueror, in Token of their utter Destruction, and of his absolute Dominion and Triumph over them, (See the Paraphrase on *Rom.* xvi. 20.)

14 *For by one Offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*

14. For by that one Offering, which he made of himself on the Cross, he has obtained perfect Deliverance from Guilt and Condemnation, and a perfect Fitness for the Worship and Enjoyment of God, in the nearest Relation and Access to him, and in the most perfect State of the Church, for all those who in a sacrificial Sense are dedicated to God, and purged from their Sins, through Faith in him; and *that* not for a Time only, but for Perpetuity, without any Change of their Privileges and Church-State on Earth, or of their consummate Happiness to all Eternity in Heaven.

15 Whereof *the Holy Ghost also is a Witness to us: For after that he had said before,*

16 *This* is *the Covenant that I will make with them after those Days, saith the Lord; I will put*

15, 16. And the Holy-Ghost himself, as a divine Person, has given us, in the inspired Writings of the Old Testament, a sweet Intimation of this important Truth, † in the Representation he hath therein made of the new Covenant, which Christ has now established, and all the Blessings of which he has now actually purchased by his Death. For after he formerly had said in a Prediction of Gospel-Times, (*Jer.* xxxi. 33, 34.) This is the Tenor of the Covenant of mere Grace, that I will make with my People, when the Days of the present Dispensation shall expire, says the great Jehovah, Instead of writing my Law of the Ten Commandments

* As *Man* is not in the Original, and *Priest* is the nearest Antecedent, *ver.* 11. I should think *the Pronoun* (αυτος) might better be rendered *this Priest*, or *this High Priest*, according as we understand the Word *Priest* in the foregoing Verse to signify, rather than *this Man*.

† In this and the three following Verses the Apostle winds up his Argument concerning the Excellency and Perfection of the Priesthood and Sacrifice of Christ; and as he had laid the Foundation of his last Set of Arguments for it, *Chap.* viii. 10—13, in a Quotation of the Account that is given of the *new Covenant*, Jer. xxxi. 33, 34; so he here issues the Whole in a Reference to the Description there given of the Covenant, as now completely ratified, and all the Blessings of it purchased, and secured to the Church, by the one only Offering of Christ, which renders all other expiatory Sacrifices, and any Repetition of his own, intirely needless.

my Laws into their Hearts, and in their Minds will I write them;

mandments on Tables of Stone, as I did at Mount *Sinai*; I, by a special inward Operation of my Spirit, (See the Note and Paraphrase on *Chap.* viii. 10) will effectually inscribe the Doctrines of divine Revelation in the fleshly Tables of their Hearts and Minds: (2 *Cor.* iii. 3.)

17 *And their Sins and Iniquities will I remember no more.*

17. And then, to assure them that nothing shall defeat the Performance of his New Covenant to them, he adds, in a Way of absolute Promise, with all the Grace and Authority of the God, who only can forgive Sins, I will so perfectly pardon all their Swervings from, and Transgressions of my Law, as never to break my Covenant, on account thereof, or call them to Remembrance any more, as tho' they were not perfectly expiated, as I did the Sins of *Israel* in the annual Repetition of their insufficient Sacrifices; (*ver.* 3) nor will I ever upbraid them with them, or produce them in Judgment against them. (See the Paraphrase on *Chap.* viii. 12.)

18 *Now, where Remission of these* is, there is *no more Offering for Sin.*

18. Now 'tis undeniable that, when there is such a complete and everlasting Forgiveness of all Trespasses according to the gracious Tenor of this Covenant, as recorded by the Holy Ghost himself, there can be no Use or Need of any farther atoning Sacrifice for Sin, nor of Christ's repeating the Sacrifice of himself; because *that*, which he has already offered, hath been effectual to procure this important Blessing of the Covenant, of which he is the Mediator, (*Chap.* ix. 15) which he has now fully confirmed, and all the Blessings of which he has purchased, once for all, by his precious Blood.

19 *Having therefore, Brethren, Boldness to enter into the Holiest by the Blood of Jesus,*

19. Since therefore, my dear Brethren in the Lord, * we, who cordially believe in Christ, have such solid Grounds of free Liberty, and so rich Encouragement, as may be gathered from the preceding Discourse, for holy Freedom and Confidence in our Approaches to God, as our reconciled God and Father, and so of entering by Faith into the Holiest of all, even Heaven itself; and are admitted to it, through the Merit, and Application to our Consciences, of the most inestimably precious Blood of Jesus, our great High Priest and Sacrifice, who himself is gone thither in Virtue of his own Blood, to present and plead it there for us, that we might not be kept at a Distance, as the People of *Israel* were from the Holy of Holies under the Law; but might follow after him in the daily Actings of our Faith, till we shall have a personal Entrance into the immediate Presence of his Glory;

20 *By a new and living Way which he*

20. Since, I say, we have this Liberty of Access to God, through the Blood of Christ, in Gospel-Worship, by the Way

* The Apostle having finished the *doctrinal* Part of his Epistle, relating to the superior Excellence of the Person, Priesthood and Sacrifice of Christ, proceeds in this and the following Verses to the End of the Epistle, to a *practical* Improvement of the Whole, which he here introduces by way of Inference from the foregoing Discourse, from which he here draws his Argument for it.

hath consecrated for us, through the Vail, that is to say, his Flesh;

of the New-Covenant; a Way, which is now lately open'd and declared, with the greatest Evidence to us, and is of such perpetual Use and Advantage, as to be always *new*, so as never to wax old or decay; and may well be called a *living* Way, as the once dead, but now living Redeemer has open'd it for us, and as 'tis the Way, in which we find quickning Virtue unto spiritual Life here, and are led on to eternal Life hereafter; and which he, who is *the Way, the Truth, and the Life*, (John xiv. 6) has prepared, dedicated and established, (ἐνεκαίνισε) as sacred to our Use, that we might not be excluded from the true Holy of Holies; but might follow our High Priest into Heaven itself, by means of his crucified Body, which procured this open Way for us, when the *Vail of the Temple was rent in twain from the Top to the Bottom*, and closed no more; which signified, among other Things, that every Obstruction to our Entrance into Heaven itself is now removed, by the Death and Sacrifice of Christ; (See the Paraphrase on *Matth.* xxvii. 51.)

21 And having *an High Priest over the House of God;*

21. And since we now have a great and glorious High Priest, every Way surpassing all that went before him in his Person, Office and Exaltation; a Priest of infinite Dignity and Authority, who is the Head of the Church militant on Earth, and triumphant in Heaven; and who, as its Lord and Proprietor, presides over it and all its Concerns, as his own House, (*Chap.* iii. 6) in which God dwells after a more excellent Manner, than he ever did in the *Jewish* Tabernacle;

22 *Let us draw near with a true Heart, in full Assurance of Faith, having our Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience, and our* * *Bodies washed with pure Water.*

22. Let us, upon these encouraging Considerations, be emboldened to make our humble Approaches to God, as our reconciled God and Father through Jesus Christ, and as seated on a Throne of Grace, that, by the Assistance of his Spirit, we may draw near to him in Prayer, and in all other Acts of religious Worship, in the Exercise of every Grace; in sweet and holy Communion with him and Conformity to him; with Integrity and Uprightness, and a Heart established in the Truth of the Gospel; and with the liveliest Exercise of Faith, even to a full Assurance of the Perfection of Christ's Priesthood and Sacrifice, and of our own Acceptance in coming to God through him, as Persons whose Souls, in all their Powers and Faculties, are cleansed from the Stupidity and Treachery of an unfaithful, and from the Disquietude and Defilement of a guilty, terrifying and condemning Conscience, by an Application of the Blood of Jesus, in Opposition to the Sprinklings of the Blood of the legal Sacrifices; and as Persons who are truly sanctified to God and his Service, by the renewing and purifying Work of the holy Spirit †, (in Opposition to the ceremonial cleansing

† *As having our Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience* evidently alludes to ceremonial Rites in various sprinklings of the Blood of the Sacrifices under the Law; so having *our Bodies washed with pure Water.*

cleansing of the Bodies of those, who drew nigh to God under the Law, by their being washed with clean Water) that the outward Conversation, as well as the inward Principles and Dispositions of the Heart, may be pure.

23 *Let us hold fast the Profession of our Faith without wavering (for he* is *faithful that promised)*

23. Correspondent hereunto, Let us maintain our solemn Profession, and open Confession of Christ, and of our Faith and Hope in him, and in the Promises of the New Covenant, which he has ratified, and the Blessings of which he has purchased by his Blood; Let us persist stedfastly and invariably in our Adherence to him, and in the Belief and Practice of every Gospel-Doctrine and Duty, without any Distrust or Hesitancy, or Perturbation of Mind, through Fear of Tribulations for his Sake, or of a Disappointment of our Hope in him: For he, who hath promised to *put his Laws into* his Peoples *Hearts*, and to *write them in their Minds*, (ver. 16) is unchangeable in his Truth and Faithfulness, and may be fully depended upon, for all seasonable Supplies of promised Grace to enable us to hold on, and hold out to the End; and for a Performance of all his Promises, unto complete Salvation.

24 *And let us consider one another to provoke unto Love, and to good Works:*

24. And to subserve our Stedfastness and Perseverance in the Faith, and in our holy Profession of it, Let it be our joint Concern seriously to consider our respective Wants and Infirmities, Temptations and Dangers, on one Hand; and the Grounds of Hope and Encouragement, that are in Christ, and in the Promises, on the other, that we may use all proper Means, by Example, Exhortations and Cautions, to stir up one another, with Fervency and Faithfulness, to the Love of God, and Christ, and the Truths of the Gospel; and to an affectionate Union and Communion one with another; and so may love as Brethren, and excite each other to every evangelical and moral Duty, and to every Thing that is truly excellent and worthy our Christian-Character.

25 *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the Manner of some* is; *but exhorting* one another: *And so much the more, as ye see the Day approaching.*

25. And as ever we would be stedfast in the Profession of our Faith, and in Love and good Works, Let us take special Heed that we don't grow cool or indifferent, remiss or careless, on any Pretence whatsoever, with regard to our stated and occasional Meetings together, as we have Opportunity, for the Celebration of all divine Ordinances; and, at length, desert Church-Assemblies, and cast off public Worship, and the Communion of Saints, and the solemn Profession of Christ's Name; and so put ourselves out of

Water, as it here stands in Connection with those Sprinklings, seems to allude to *divers Washings*, Chap. ix. 10, among which were the Priest's washing his Flesh in Water, and having the Water of Purification sprinkled upon him, before he went into the Presence of the Lord. *Lev.* xvi. 4, and *Numb.* viii 7.—But if we suppose, with some Expositors, that here is a Reference to the New Testament-Ordinance of *Baptism*; *the Mode* of administring it may be signified by *the sprinkling of the Conscience*, as well as by *washing the Body*; and the cleansing Virtue of the Blood and Sacrifice of Christ, or of the Spirit in his applying the Blood of Christ to the Soul, which is signified by Baptism, is expressed by God's *sprinkling clean Water upon us, that we may be clean.* Ezek. xxxvi. 25.

the

the Way of his Promise and Blessing for our Preservation and Growth in Grace, Comfort and Holiness, as is too much the Custom of some, that have given up their Names to Christ, but are visibly backsliding from him; and as is the lamentable Case of others, that have notoriously and shamefully apostatized from all their former Profession of him: But, instead of being influenced by their sinful and pernicious Example, or treading in their dangerous Steps, Let us admonish, excite and encourage each other, to frequent our religious Assemblies on all Occasions, and to go on with Cheerfulness and Constancy in the good Ways of the Lord. And ye ought to be the more diligent and earnest herein, that ye may be the better prepared against the awful Time, that is coming on, in Proportion to the plain Signs, which ye may now easily observe, that the utter Destruction of *Jerusalem* and the *Jewish* Nation, for their obstinate Infidelity, hastens apace, and is very near at Hand; and against the Day of Death and Judgment, which ye cannot but know will soon overtake you, whether ye fall in the approaching Calamity or not, and which will be an inexpressibly dreadful Day to Apostates.

26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the Knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more Sacrifice for Sins,

26. For if any of us, who make a Profession of Christ's Name, be so much under the Power of Unbelief, Prejudice, Pride and a worldly Temper, as, not merely through Inadvertency, or some sudden Hurry of Spirit, Temptation and Fear of Danger *; but deliberately, resolutely and willingly, with full Consent, to reject the Doctrines of the Gospel, and the good Ways of the Lord, and to turn back to Judaism, or to all Irreligion, and go on in a Course of Sin against God, after we have been enlightned in, and convinced of the Truth of the Gospel, with respect to the Way of Salvation alone by Jesus Christ; the Case of such Apostates is of all others the most dreadful: For as all legal Sacrifices are of no farther Use in the Worship of God, nor ever were available to purge from the moral Guilt of Sin; and as there never was any Sacrifice appointed under the Law for presumptuous Sinners; so there remains no other, than the one only Sacrifice of Christ, for the Remission of Sins; and they that reject this last and only Remedy, by perfidious Unbelief, can have no Interest in it; nor can there be any Hope of Pardon and Acceptance with God on any other Ground whatsoever.

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* *The Sin* here intended, as appears from all the preceding and following Context, is a wilful, reso*lute, contemptuous* and *utter Apostacy* from the Profession of Christ and his Gospel. And therefore, tho' we ought to be always upon the strictest Guard against every known Sin, and to be deeply humbled before God, whenever we fall into it; yet this Text is not to be understood of every Sin, that has been committed under the Power of Temptation, against Light and Conviction, as some tender spirited Christians are often apt to apply it, to their own great Discouragement and Terror, almost to utter Despair.

27 But a certain fearful Looking for of Judgment, and fiery Indignation, which shall devour the Adversaries.

27. But all that remains to them, as their deplorable Portion, is nothing less, than a Sort of terrible foreboding in their Consciences of the righteous Judgment of God, which will certainly overtake them, an awful Emblem of which will soon be given in the Destruction of *Jerusalem*; and they must look for the incensed Wrath of God to fall upon them, which will burn in the most tremendous Manner, like the hottest Fire, to consume all such Enemies, as set themselves against the blessed and only Saviour. (See 2 *Thess*. i. 7, 8, 9.)

28 He that despised Moses' Law, died without Mercy, under two or three Witnesses;

28. And this, the wretched Apostates I am speaking of, may be assured will be their horrible End, with the highest Aggravations of Guilt and Misery, if they only consider how severely God dealt with refractory Transgressors of, and Revolters from the *Mosaic* Law, according to the Tenor of which, Whosoever contemned and presumptuously transgressed the Law given by *Moses*, with regard to capital Cases, for which no Sacrifice was appointed, he was, by the Order of God himself, (*Numb*. xv. 30, 31, and *Deut*. xvii. 6, and xix. 11—13) to be put to Death, without the least Pity to spare him, or to mitigate his Punishment, whenever he was convicted by the Testimony of two or three credible Witnesses, that could prove the Fact upon him. So jealous was God for the Authority and Honour of that Dispensation.

29 Of how much sorer Punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath troden under Foot the Son of God, and hath counted the Blood of the Covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy Thing, and hath done Despite unto the Spirit of Grace?

29. How much greater, and inexpressibly more dreadful then, must ye certainly conclude in your own Consciences, from the very Nature and Reason of Things, will that Punishment be, even unto eternal Death, which is justly due to, and shall be inflicted upon an Apostate from the Lord Jesus Christ, and a resolute Sinner against all the Light and Grace of the Gospel, and against his own Conviction of its Truth, who has offered the highest Indignity to the eternal Son of God himself, in trampling upon his divine Person and Authority, Mediation and Gospel, with the vilest Insolence and Contempt, as though he were an Impostor; and who, instead of trusting, for Pardon and Justification, in that precious Blood, by which the Covenant of Grace in its purest Administration was ratified, and all its Blessings procured †, and by which the incarnate Son of God himself

† *The Blood of the Covenant, wherewith he was sanctified,* seems to relate to *Christ*, who was consecrated to his priestly Office by his own Blood, rather than to him, *who counted the Blood of the Covenant an unholy Thing*: For the *Son of God* is the immediate Antecedent, and the Apostle's Design was to aggravate the Sin of Apostates, from a Consideration of *the Worth and Dignity of the Object* they slighted and abused; and as the Father is said to have *sanctified* Christ, or set him apart to his mediatorial Office, and Christ spake of his having *sanctified* or dedicated and set apart himself to it by his Death, *John* x. 36, and xvii. 19; so he was sanctified to his priestly Office in Heaven, by the Blood of the New Covenant, answerable to the Sanctification or Dedication of *Aaron* and his Sons to the High Priesthood for the Service of the Sanctuary, by the Blood of the *Mosaic* Covenant, *Lev*. viii. 30; and the Scheme of this Epistle for comparing Christ and the High-Priest under the Law, naturally leads

ſelf was conſecrated to his prieſtly Office, for the complete Execution of it, has prophanely ſlighted, and injuriouſly treated that very Blood, which he ſhed for the Remiſſion of Sin, as though it were not ſo holy as the Blood of Bulls and Goats; nor more ſacred, or of any more Value or Efficacy, than the Blood of a common Man, or even than the Blood of a Malefactor, according to the Account that the *Jews* made of him when they crucified him; and who, over and above all this, has ſpitefully, maliciouſly and contemptuouſly oppoſed, affronted and vilified the Perſon, Operations and Grace of the good Spirit, that is freely given of God for gracious Purpoſes, and is the Giver and Applier of all Grace, as though his wonderful Atteſtations to Chriſt's Character, as the true Meſſiah, by innumerable Gifts and miraculous Operations,* were Deluſions, or the Effects of diabolical Power. Such a malignant Wretch blaſphemes the Holy Ghoſt himſelf, and if they who only *neglect* the Goſpel Salvation, ſhall not eſcape the Wrath of God, (*Chap*. ii. 3) how much leſs can ſuch an Apoſtate eſcape the moſt dreadful and eternal Puniſhment? (*Mat*. xii. 31.)

30 *For we know him that hath ſaid, Vengeance* belongeth *unto me, I will recompenſe, ſaith the Lord. And again, The Lord ſhall judge his People.*

30. For we know who it is, that ſpoke after the following awful Manner; (*Deut*, xxxii. 35) 'Tis my inconteſtable Right, and abſolute Prerogative, to execute righteous Wrath upon Tranſgreſſors of every Kind, according to their Deſert; this is an eſſential Part of my Supremacy and Dominion over all, as the Judge of the whole World: And, as the Vindication of my Honour requires it, I will certainly, ſooner or later, in my own Time and Way, inflict ſevere Puniſhments on incorrigible Offenders, in Proportion to the Malignity of their Crimes. This was ſaid by the great Jehovah himſelf, the ſovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth, whoſe Juſtice and Truth are uncontrollable, and whoſe Power is irreſiſtible. And a little afterwards 'tis there added, (*Deut*. xxxii. 36) The Lord will ſearch and try his profeſſing People; and will as ſurely condemn and deſtroy them, that perfidiouſly revolt from him, as he will approve of, and ſave them, that are ſtedfaſt in his Covenant.

31 It is *a fearful Thing to fall into the Hands of the living God.*

31. How ſevere then muſt his Judgment, and the Executions of it, be upon all Apoſtates from Chriſt and the Goſpel? 'Tis indeed dreadful to ſuffer the Miſeries, that he can lay upon them, by only ſtirring up the Fury of mere Creatures againſt them, though the Weakneſs of the In-

leads us to this Senſe—But if any would refer it to the Perſon, that was guilty of the Sin here ſpoken of, his being *ſanctified* may be conſider'd, as relating, not to a real internal Sanctification, but to an external viſible Dedication to God in his Baptiſm and Entrance into Church-Communion, by which he made a ſolemn Profeſſion of being purged from his Sins, and ſanctified or ſet apart to the Lord.

* The Perſon here deſcribed ſeems to have come very near to, if not to have been guilty of, the unpardonable Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt himſelf, which our Lord ſpeaks of, *Mat*. xii. 31, 32. (See the Note there.) Only there may be this Difference, that the Apoſtate had *received the Knowledge of the Truth*, (ver. 26) which they, whom our Lord ſpoke of, never did.

strument abates the Force of his Hand in smiting with it: But 'tis inexpressibly tremendous, beyond all Imagination, to fall as Victims into the Hands of his Justice, without Mixture of Mercy, to be punished by the immediate and almighty Arm of the great and terrible God himself; who, in Opposition to all Idols, is the only living and true God; and whose Existence, Power and Activity abide invariably and for ever, to execute Wrath, as an incensed, unappeased Judge, to the utmost Extremity on the Despisers of his Son and Spirit, (*ver.* 29) as well as to complete the everlasting Happiness of those, that hold fast the Profession of their Faith without wavering. (*ver.* 23.)

32 *But call to Remembrance the former Days, in which after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great Fight of Afflictions;*

32. But, to excite sincere Believers among you to watch and guard against the Beginnings of Apostacy, Consider how it was with you, and reflect upon the solid Satisfaction and Hope ye formerly experienced, in the first Days of your Conversion, in which, as soon as ye were enlighten'd in the Knowledge of the Gospel, and of the Way of Salvation by Jesus Christ, (*ver.* 26, and see the second Note on *Chap.* vi. 4) ye were followed with severe Persecutions from the Jewish Zealots, and their Confederates; which ye, like Soldiers under the Captain of Salvation, and like Combatants in the Agonistic Exercises, were called to conflict with, in a glorious Contention, on your Part, for the Sake of Christ, as with Enemies, that set themselves, as it were in Battle array against him and you; and which ye patiently sustained with a noble Christian-Courage and Fortitude, through divine Supports and Assistances, without being daunted or dismayed at any of them, tho' they were of various Kinds, and lay very heavy upon you:

33 *Partly whilst ye were made a gazing-stock, both by Reproaches and Afflictions; and partly whilst ye became Companions of them that were so used.*

33. While, on one Hand, ye were maliciously accused and injuriously exposed to public Disgrace, and made a Spectacle to the World, like Criminals brought forth into the Theatre, (θεατριζόμενοι) and were ignominiously treated, as the *Filth of the World, and Off-scouring of all Things*, (1 Cor. iv. 9, 13) by cruel Mockings, Contempt and Scorn, and by the severest Oppressions from the Hands of wicked Men, *Jews* and others, for Righteousness Sake; and while, on the other Hand, ye tenderly sympathized with, and stedfastly adhered to, assisted and bravely owned your Fellow-Christians, and the Apostles and Servants of Christ, and mourned with them in their Troubles, who were abused in the same oppressive and opprobrious Manner, as though all had been done against yourselves.

34 *For ye had Compassion of me in my*

34. For as to myself in particular *, when I was in great Tribulation, even unto Bonds and Imprisonment for the

* Here seems to be a Reference to the Apostle *Paul*'s Sufferings and Bonds, which were notorious, and extremely great; and in which the *Jewish* Believers tenderly sympathized with him, as appears from *Acts* xx. 37, 38, and xxi. 4, 11, 12, 13.

Sake

Bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your Goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in Heaven a better and an enduring Substance.

Sake of Christ, ye were not ashamed to own and stand by me; but in Christian-Tenderness, Love and Pity, ye sympathized with me, (συνεπαθήσατε) grieved at my Distress, prayed for me, relieved my Wants, and supply'd me with as comfortable Accommodations, as our respective Circumstances admitted of: And ye yourselves cheerfully submitted to the Loss of the Conveniences and Necessaries of this Life, which were violently wrested out of your Hands by furious Persecutors; and ye even rejoiced to think of the glorious Cause, for which ye suffered, (*Acts* v. 41) and of the rich Advantage, that would accrue to your own Souls thereby, as being well satisfied in your own Minds, from the Promises of God and your own happy Experience of his Grace, that ye have a better Treasure in Heaven, than any ye have lost or can lose upon Earth; even a substantial Treasure, which ye are intitled to, and is prepared by the free Favour of God, and the Purchase of Christ, who as your Head and Representative has taken Possession of it for you; and which ye have the Earnests of in your own Souls, as what cannot be lost, or taken away from you, but abides with all Safety for an everlasting Inheritance at the End of all your Troubles.

35 *Cast not away therefore your Confidence, which hath great Recompence of Reward.*

35. Animated therefore by your Faith in Christ, and in the Promises, and by your holy Fortitude in Sufferings for him hitherto, Take heed lest, through carnal Fear, and the Workings of Unbelief, on Account of the Continuance of those, or the Addition of any further Tribulations, ye be now disheartned, to the relinquishing, or throwing off your holy Boldness, Freedom and Courage (παρρησίαν) in your Profession of Christ's Name, Gospel and Cause, and in your joyful Hopes of eternal Life through him; which holy Boldness herein is, at present, a noble Support and Satisfaction under all your Trials, and shall have such a blessed and glorious Reward in Heaven, as, according to his gracious Promise, (*ver.* 36) is secured to you, and will abundantly more than make you a rich and eternal Amends for all the Troubles ye endure in this momentary Life for Christ's Sake, though they be ever so great and many, like those which ye have already felt, and may yet further expect to meet with. (See *Rom.* viii. 18, and 2 *Cor.* iv. 16, 17.)

36 *For ye have need of Patience; that after ye have done the Will of God, ye might receive the Promise.*

36. For, according to the wise and holy Appointment of God, the Declarations of his Word, and the Disposals of his Providence, that *Patience may have its perfect Work*, (Jam. i. 4) such is your present State of Afflictions and Persecutions, that there is a Necessity for you, and great need of abundance of Grace to enable you, to live in the continual Exercise of a calm and quiet, humble and resigned Submission to the sovereign Will of God in them, to the End that after ye have yielded yourselves up, through the whole Course of your Lives, to the commanding and disposing Will of God, in patiently and willingly complying with

with the most difficult Instances of it, ye might receive the promised Blessing of eternal Life, (1 *John* ii. 25) which shall be graciously conferred upon you, in the Salvation of your Souls, (*ver.* 39) at the End of your spiritual Race and Warfare, that will soon be finished, and exchanged for everlasting Peace and Joy.

37 *For yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.*

37. For, accordingto an antient prophetic Vision, (*Habak.* ii. 3) which may be applied, as relating to the Messiah and his Salvation, in all his remarkable Appearances, The Time is exceeding short, as short as can be well expected, (μικρον οσον οσον) when the Messiah, who is coming, (ο ερχομενος) will certainly come, in his righteous Judgment, for the Confusion of his and your Enemies, and in his tender Mercy for your Consolation, and Deliverance from all their Oppressions, in the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, which is just at Hand, and is a lively Emblem of his *last*, which may be emphatically called his *second* Coming, (*Chap.* ix. 28) to the utter Destruction of all impenitent and unbelieving Sinners, and to your complete Salvation, at the Judgment of the great Day; which, though it be not so near as the Conflagration of *Jerusalem*; yet in God's Account, with whom a thousand Years are but as one Day, (2 *Pet.* iii. 8) and in Comparison with the endless Eternity that succeeds it, will be but a very little while hence; and then he who is to come, will actually come, without fail, to your unspeakable and everlasting Joy: And though ye are apt to think the Time long and tedious, while ye are groaning under present Afflictions; yet ye may depend upon it, that he will not delay his coming to put you into Possession of the promised Recompence of Reward; (*ver.* 35, 36) no, not so much as one Moment beyond the appointed Time, which, as it is the best Time, is fixed in the Purpose of God, and is near at Hand, to deliver you out of all your Troubles; and as Death at farthest will certainly rid you of them; so it cannot be long before he will receive you to himself.

38 *Now the Just shall live by Faith: But if* any Man *draw back, my Soul shall have no Pleasure in him.*

38. And, (*h*) for your further Encouragement, remember what follows in that Prophecy, (*Habak.* ii. 4) * The righteous Man, who is *justified by Faith*, and *whose Heart is purified by Faith*, (Rom. v. 1, and Acts xv. 9) shall by means of his Faith live a spiritual and holy Life, in a State of Acceptance with God, and Communion with him, and in a humble patient waiting for, and Expectation of this happy Event all his Days upon Earth; and shall live in all Blessedness and Glory with Christ, according to the Promise, (*ver.* 36) for ever in Heaven: But, in Opposition to such, whoever he be that, after having made a Profession of

* *The Just shall live by Faith* might be better render'd, (as Dr. *Owen* observes, according to the Order in which the Words stand) *The Just by Faith shall live.* (ο δικαιος εκ πιστεως ζησεται.)

Faith

Faith in Christ, shall apostatize from him, † through an unsubdued Pride of Spirit, and an evil Heart of Unbelief which lift up themselves against him, and renounce the Profession of his Name, on Account of the Trials and Sufferings it exposes him to, My Soul, says God, speaking after the Manner of Men, shall be so far from taking any Delight in him, whatsoever his Pretences be, that I will have him in the utmost Detestation, and will shew him no Mercy; instead of my Favour's being towards him, my hottest Indignation shall be incensed against him.

39 But we are not of them who draw back unto Perdition; but of them that believe, to the saving of the Soul.

39. But, as I have already told you, (*Chap.* vi. 9) that *I am persuaded better Things of you, and Things that accompany Salvation*; so we who are sincere in our Profession of Christ, and are in Truth before God what we appear to be before Men, are not of the Number of those hypocritical, treacherous and false-hearted, nominal Christians, who revolt from him, and cast off their Profession of him, to their own everlasting Destruction: But we are of the Number of those, who *believe with the Heart unto Righteousness, and confess with the Mouth unto Salvation*, (Rom. x 10) and shall stedfastly persevere therein to the End, as being *kept by the Power of God, through Faith, unto Salvation*; (1 Pet. i. 5) and so, according to his Promise, our Faith stands in sure Connection with, and shall certainly issue in the everlasting Happiness of our Souls.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How defective were all legal Sacrifices! They and all attending Institutions were, at best, only a Shadow of Christ's propitiatory Sacrifice, and the Blessings of the Gospel introduced by him. The frequent Repetition of those Sacrifices was a plain Proof of their Imperfection; they could not prevent the Returns of Guilt upon the Conscience; nor could they possibly take away Sin, or be pleasing to God for that Purpose. But how meritorious and effectual is the Sacrifice of Christ, who freely came into an incarnate State, according to antient Purposes and Records, to fulfil his Father's Will by offering up himself! This alone is sufficient for purging all that believe in him from every Iniquity, and recommending them to God's Acceptance, as a People dedicated to his Service; and for perfecting all that concerns them: And our great Lord is now exalted, as a Priest on his Throne, at the Right Hand of the eternal Father, where he must reign till all his Enemies be subdued under his Feet. And O what a blessed Security have the People of God in him, and in the Covenant of Grace, which the Holy Ghost has recorded, with a View to Gospel-Times, in the Writings of the Old-Testament! It is now ratified, and all its Blessings are purchased for them, by the Death of Christ, on whose Account God will write his Law and his Gospel in their Hearts, and will so thoroughly forgive all their Sins, as never more to remember any of them against them. What rich Encouragement then have we to draw near to God in Christ, with humble Boldness, and full Assurance of Faith! Jesus our High Priest has opened a new and living Way to the Throne of Grace, through his crucified Flesh, and now appears in Heaven itself to recommend us and our Prayers to divine Acceptance, by the Sprinklings of his Blood, and the sanctifying

† That the Persons, intended in this last Clause of the Verse, are different from those mentioned in the former, is evident to me; because of the Opposition that, both in the Prophet *Habakkuk*, and in this and the following Verse, is made between them, and those that *live by Faith*, and do *not draw back to Perdition; but believe to the saving of the Soul.*

Influence

Influences of his Spirit. But how watchful ought we to be against the Beginnings of Apostacy! If our Love and Zeal for every good Work be in a declining State, and we grow cool and indifferent about attending on religious Assemblies and Gospel-Ordinances, we have Reason to fear, lest we fall after the Example of some other Professors of Christ, that have revolted from him; and the Thoughts of awful Trials, and of Death and Judgment, as near approaching, should excite us to the greater Care herein. Ah! how extremely dangerous is the Case of Apostates, who, after they have been convinced of the Truth of the Gospel, vilify the Son of God; depreciate the Blood of the Covenant, whereby he was consecrated to the remaining Part of his priestly Office; and treat the Spirit of all Grace with malignant Contempt! As there is no other Sacrifice for Sin, than that which they reject and despise, they can have nothing to expect, but Judgment without Mercy, and flaming Wrath to consume them: And as their Sin is more abundantly aggravated than any Transgressions of *Moses*'s Law, for which Offenders were put to Death, we must suppose, from the Reason of Things, that they deserve a proportionally heavier Vengeance; and we are assured from divine Testimony, that the great God will assert his own Prerogative, in calling them to a severe Account for all their wilful Abuses of Gospel-Light and Grace. Alas! how dreadful is it to fall into the Hands of his provoked Power and Justice, who lives for ever to inflict the sorest Punishment upon impenitent Sinners! But whatever Losses, Troubles, or Reproaches true Believers may suffer for Christ, they ought not to cast away their humble Confidence and Joy in him, and their holy Profession of his Name; as being satisfied in their own Minds, that they have a more substantial and abiding Inheritance in Heaven. This is indeed a great Recompence of Reward, which the faithful God will give them according to his gracious Promise; and the Prospect of this, together with a Remembrance of their former Experience of divine Light and Support under their various Tribulations for Christ, and compassionate Regard to Fellow-Sufferers, should encourage their Faith and Hope, and animate their Patience amidst further Difficulties, that may befal them: For in a very little Time the Lord Jesus will certainly come by Death and Judgment, and will not tarry one Moment beyond the set Time, for their Salvation.— Upon the whole then, how wide is the Difference between nominal Professors and sincere Believers! One is in Danger of drawing back to Perdition, and falling under divine Abhorrence; but the other is justified by Faith, and by means of his Faith lives to God here, and shall live with him for ever hereafter, as having believed to the saving of his Soul.

CHAP. XI.

The Apostle describes the excellent Nature and Efficacy of Faith, 1—3. *Exemplifies it in several Instances and Effects, with an Intimation of its Necessity, from the Fall of Man to* Noah's *Days,* 4—6. *From* Noah *to* Moses, 7—23. *And from* Moses *to the End of the Old Testament-Dispensation,* 24—39. *And concludes with a Declaration of the still better State of Believers under the Gospel-Dispensation,* ver. 40.

TEXT.

1 NOW Faith is the Substance of Things hoped for,

PARAPHRASE.

1. NOW, to give you a summary Account of the excellent Nature and Effects of all divine Faith *, inclusive of that, which we have been speaking of as unto Salvation,

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* The Description given of Faith in this Verse, and exemplified in the various following Instances, I take, with the learned Dr. *Owen* and others, to be a Description of Faith, inclusive indeed of that which is justifying, but not under the strict Notion of it, merely as justifying: For *this* is only, as it has a Regard to, and depends upon *Christ* and his Righteousness; but here is no Mention of *him* as the Object of Faith; and in several of the Instances that are produced in the following Parts of this Chapter to exemplify it, there is no Notice taken of *him*, or of his Salvation, but only of *temporal* Blessings.

the Evidence of Things not seen.

Salvation, (*Chap.* x. 38, 39.) It may be *in general* described after the following Manner, True Faith gives a Sort of present Subsistence in the Mind and Heart unto, and a confident Expectation of, all future Blessings, which, on the Foot of the Promise of that God who cannot lie, are as fully ascertained and realized to the Believer's Comfort, and have their proper Influence upon him, as though they were already present in actual Possession; and it gives us as clear and convincing a Demonstration, merely on the Credit of divine Revelation, as to the Truth of Things that are invisible to the corporal Eye, as though they were ever so plainly exhibited to our View, like the Things that daily offer to our Sight.

2 For by it the Elders obtained a good Report.

2. For by the realizing and evidencing Exercise of Faith, our godly Ancestors of all Generations, from the Time of the first Promise of the Seed of the Woman to bruise the Serpent's Head, (*Gen.* iii. 15.) to the End of the *Jewish* Dispensation, obtained a noble Testimony from God, though evil spoken of by wicked Men; a Record of which is left particularly with respect to some of them in his Word, that they were righteous Persons, through the Righteousness of Faith, and that they pleased God in their Walk before him. (*ver.* 4, 5, 7.)

3 Through Faith we understand that the Worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that Things which are seen were not made of Things which do appear.

3. As to the *Evidence of Things not seen*, which is one Part of the Description of Faith, (*ver.* 1.) Though by the Light of Nature we may justly conclude from the Beauty and Order of the Creation, that there was a first Cause of all its wonderful Fabric; yet 'tis by Faith in divine Revelation, and by this only, as resting merely upon the Authority of God therein, that we certainly and clearly know, beyond all that could be suggested by natural Reason, that the upper and lower Worlds, the Heavens and the Earth, and all Things therein, were formed, fashioned and finished, (κατηρτισθαι) by the all-powerful and effective Word of God's Command, * who in framing their several Parts, and setting them in their proper Order said, Let it be so, and it was so. (*Gen.* i. 7, 9, 11, 15, 24, 30.) *He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.* (Ps. xxxiii. 6, 9.) And this he did unto the producing of all the visible Things of the Creation, such as the Sun, Moon and Stars, the Earth, and all the Objects of our Senses, out of a confused *Chaos*, which was created out of nothing, and, being covered with

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Blessings, which were obtained by Faith: And yet they may all be considered as so many Proofs and Evidences of the Truth and Efficacy of justifying Faith in real Believers on Christ, and of its more extensive Exercise to the Glory of God, and their own Encouragement to go on in a Course of Dependence upon him, and Obedience to him, amidst all the Difficulties and Dangers of every Kind, that surround them in this sinful World.

* Though Christ is often spoken of as *the Word*, (ο λογος) and *the Worlds* are said to be *made by him*; yet the Expression here used is different from that, by which he is denominated; and this *Word* (ρημα) signifies a Word *spoken*, but is never used for the *Person of Christ*, who is stiled *the Logos*; and so 'tis here meant of the Word of *Command*, as appears from the Places cited in the Paraphrase.

Darkneſs, was without Form and void; (Gen. i. 1, 2.) and which *Chaos* itſelf has now no apparent Exiſtence; all Things being ranged into their due Order, and made viſible by the inviſible Power of God. (*Rom.* i. 20.)

4 By Faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent Sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained Witneſs that he was righteous, God teſtifying of his Gifts: And by it he being dead, yet ſpeaketh.

4. As to the other Part of the Deſcription of Faith, as *the Subſtance of Things hoped for*, (ver. 1.) It was by Faith in God's Appointment of typical Sacrifices of Atonement, * that *Abel*, the younger, but pious Son of *Adam*, looking forward to the promiſed Seed, who ſhould bruiſe the Serpent's Head, (*Gen.* iii. 15.) preſented to God a greater and compleater Sacrifice than his wicked Brother *Cain*, who offered only the *Mincha* or Meat-Offering of ſuch Fruit of the Ground as came to Hand (*Gen.* iv. 3.) in Acknowledgment of God, as the Creator and Governor of the World; but offered no atoning Sacrifice in Acknowledgment of his own Sin, and Need of Pardon; while *Abel*, together with an Offering of the beſt of that Sort of Fruit, offered alſo a bloody Sacrifice of the Firſtlings of his Flock, with the Fat thereof, (*Gen.* iv. 4.) as a Sacrifice, which under an humble Senſe of his Guilt, and of his needing an Atonement, he preſented to the Lord with a believing Reference to the Lamb of God, or the great propitiatory Sacrifice, which *Abel*'s typify'd, and which the Meſſiah would offer for the Remiſſion of Sin; by Means of which Faith he obtained a Teſtimony from God in his own Conſcience, and by ſome viſible Token from Heaven; † that he was juſtified through the Righteouſneſs of Faith; God thereby manifeſtly declaring, that he approved and accepted of his ſacrificial Oblations, as having a Reſpect firſt to *Abel*, and then to his Offering. (*Gen.* iv. 4.) And by Means of this Faith, (the Record of which, as well as of its Acceptance, and of *Cain*'s Enmity to him on that Account, is handed down in the Word of God) *Abel*, though dead many Ages ago, inſtructs us that, ever ſince the Fall of Man, the Way of a Sinner's Acceptance with God is only through Faith in

* A late learned Writer obſerves, and ſupports it with juſt Criticiſm, that the *Greek* Word, (πλειωι) in the *comparative* Degree, ſignifies *greater*, or *fuller*, or *more in Number*, rather than *in Value*, in which laſt Senſe 'tis not uſed in the whole New Teſtament; and ſo it intimates that *Abel* brought *more Sacrifice*, to wit, the *Mincha* or *Meat-Offering*, and an *animal* Sacrifice, which was more than *Cain* did, who brought only the *Mincha* or *Meat-Offering* of the Fruits of the Earth. Accordingly *Abel*'s Offering is called in the plural Number his *Gifts* at the Cloſe of the Verſe; (See *Kennicot*'s Diſcourſe on the Oblations of *Cain* and *Abel*, Page 197, 8, 9,) and in another Place he adds, (Page 234) *The Lord had Reſpect to Abel, and alſo to his Mincha* or *Offering*, becauſe accompanied with an *animal* Sacrifice; but unto *Cain, and to his Mincha* or *Offering, he had not Reſpect*, becauſe he brought no animal Sacrifice. This naturally leads us to conclude that *Abel* offered with Faith in the great Sacrifice of Atonement, and *Cain* without Faith in it; and ſo, if it can't be certainly gathered from the more general Uſe of the Word, it may from the Nature of the Thing, that *Abel*'s Offering was in reality, and in God's Account more excellent than *Cain*'s.

* There was ſome *Token*, by which *Cain* knew that *Abel*'s Offering was accepted, and his own rejected; and it was moſt probably by God's ſending Fire from Heaven to conſume *Abel*'s Sacrifice, as he afterwards often did in various other Inſtances, (*Lev.* ix. 24, 1 *Kings* xviii. 38, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 26, and 2 *Chron.* vii. 1.) to teſtify his Acceptance of the Offering, and that Juſtice ſeized upon the Sacrifice, inſtead of the Sinner who offered it, and for whom it was offer'd.

the atoning Sacrifice of Chriſt; and that the Blood of innocent Perſons cries to Heaven for Vengeance to come down on the Heads of their Murderers, and eſpecially of ſuch as perſecute them to Death for Righteouſneſs Sake, after the Example of wicked *Cain*, who murdered his Brother, *becauſe his Works were righteous, and his own were evil.* (1 John iii. 12.)

5 By Faith Enoch was tranſlated that he ſhould not ſee Death; and was not found, becauſe God had tranſlated him; for before his Tranſlation he had this Teſtimony, that he pleaſed God.

5. It was by Faith that *Enoch*, the ſeventh from *Adam*, was by an extraordinary miraculous Exertion of divine Power and Mercy, actually caught up in his whole Perſon from Earth to Heaven, the Habitation of God's Glory, to enjoy him there in a State of Immortality, for which his Body underwent a refining Change, like that which the Bodies of the Saints, that may be living upon Earth, ſhall paſs thorough, at the general Reſurrection from the Dead; (1 *Cor.* xv. 51.) he being thus highly favoured of the Lord, that, like them, (1 *Theſſ.* iv. 17.) he might be exempted from dying, which in the *Hebrew*-Idiom is called *ſeeing Death*, or ſenſibly undergoing it by ſuch a Diſſolution of this mortal Frame, as conſiſts in a Separation of Soul and Body, according to the general Law, which has paſſed upon Mankind for the firſt Tranſgreſſion. (*Rom.* v. 12.) And whatever Enquiries and Searches might be made after him, he was no more to be found in this World: The *Eyes that had ſeen him, ſaw him no more*; (Job xx. 9.) becauſe God had taken him by a peculiar Indulgence to himſelf, to dwell in his immediate Preſence on high: For before he was favoured with this miraculous and happy Rapture of Soul and Body up to Heaven, he had a divine Teſtimony* in his own Conſcience, by a private Suggeſtion or Witneſs of the Spirit; and had afterwards a further public Teſtimony given to him in the Writings of *Moſes*, that, before he was thus tranſlated, he was accepted of God; and had, in an eminent Manner of walking cloſely in Communion with God, and in a Courſe of Faith, Love and holy Obedience, (*Gen.* v. 24.) been highly pleaſing to him, through the the promiſed Meſſiah, of whom *Enoch* propheſied, ſaying, *Behold the Lord comes with ten thouſand of his Saints, to execute Judgment upon all*, &c. (Jude, *ver.* 14, 15.)

6 But without Faith it is *impoſſible to pleaſe* him. *For he that*

6. But without this Kind of Faith, * as it was impoſſible for *Abel* and *Enoch*, ſo it is for us to do any Thing in ſuch a ſpiritual and holy Manner, as is well pleaſing in the Sight of God: For

* As I can't but think that *Enoch*'s, as well as *Abel*'s Faith, had a Reſpect to the promiſed Meſſiah, and that *therefore* the Offering of *Abel*, and the holy Walk of *Enoch* were teſtified to, as acceptable and well-pleaſing to God; ſo it ſeems to me that the Faith here ſpoken of, with an immediate Reference to theſe Inſtances, as that, *without which 'tis impoſſible to pleaſe God*, is to be conſidered, together with the Belief of his Exiſtence, as of the ſame Nature with theirs, in its Regard to God through Chriſt, though it be not expreſs'd, but is only to be gathered from what was ſaid about the Actings of their Faith, in Things pertaining to Acceptance with God to eternal Life. And the whole Context forbids our taking this to be the *Heathens Creed*, as ſome would have it.

cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that *he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

whosoever he be that approaches to God in Prayer, and in other Acts of religious Worship, in order to his finding Acceptance with him, he ought, and 'tis absolutely necessary for him in the first Place, to be firmly persuaded in his own Mind, by that Faith which is *the Evidence of Things not seen,* (ver. 1.) that, according to divine Revelation, there certainly is a God, who, though invisible, has an eternal, necessary and unchangeable Existence, in Distinction from, and Opposition to, all the Idols of the Heathen, and all that are not *by Nature God:* (Gal. iv. 8.) And he must further believe with that Faith, which is the *Substance of Things hoped for,* (ver. 1.) that this infinitely perfect and blessed God himself is, according to his Promise to *Abraham,* (Gen. xv. 1.) *the exceeding great Reward* of, and a bountiful Distributer of all the Blessings of Providence, Grace and Glory to those, who, under a Consciousness of their own Wants and Unworthiness, humbly, earnestly and perseveringly seek his Face and Favour in Christ with their whole Hearts, according to his Word, in the diligent Use of all the Means of his Appointment, and in a Reliance on his Covenant-Promises, for all Acceptance with him.

7 *By Faith Noah being warned of God of Things not seen as yet, moved with Fear, prepared an Ark to the Saving of his House; by the which he condemned the World, and became Heir of the Righteousness which is by Faith.*

7 By Faith as *the Evidence of Things not seen,* (ver. 1.) *Noah, who found Grace in the Eyes of the Lord, and was righteous* in his Account (*Gen.* vi. 8, and vii. 1.) and who, like *Enoch,* walked with God in all holy Obedience, fully depended on the Truth of the divine Admonition, which was given him, (χρηματισθεὶς) relating to Events, of which there was no present Appearance; as particularly that, for the Wickedness of the People, God would bring a universal Deluge to drown the old World, in which he lived; and that, of the whole human Race, only he and his Wife and three Sons, and their Wives, who as yet had no Children, should be preserved alive: (*Gen.* vi. 12, 13, 18.) And being possessed with a religious Awe and Reverence of God, (εὐλαβηθεὶς) and Fear of his Judgments, he, according to his Direction, and in Obedience to his Command, (*Gen.* vi. 14, 15, 16) was excited to, and actually did prepare Materials, and fit them for, and frame them into a large floating Vessel *, for the safe Preservation, as he believed it would be, of himself and his Family, consisting only of eight Souls, (1 *Pet.* iii. 20) that they might not be swallowed up in the Flood: By which Faith of his in the Truth and Power, Justice and Mercy of God, as revealed to him; and by his building the Ark, in Obedience to the divine Commandment; as also

* *The Ark* was nearly of an oblong Square with a flat Bottom and sloped Roof, as might be best suited to float steadily on the Surface of the Water. It was a Vessel of three hundred Cubits in length, fifty in Breadth, and thirty in Height; and consisted of three Decks, or Stories, capacious enough to hold all the living Creatures, and sufficient Provisions for them, that were ordered to go into this Ark. (See *Universal History,* Book I. Page 103. *Edit.* 1.)

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by his Discourse, as *a Preacher of Righteousness*, (2 Pet. ii. 5) He both practically and doctrinally condemned the Unbelief and Disobedience of the rest of the World, that slighted all the solemn Warnings, which God in his great Long-suffering had given them by him, and by the Strivings of his Spirit with them under his Ministry, for an hundred and twenty Years together: (*Gen.* vi. 3) thereby leaving them without Excuse, and vindicating the Justice of God in bringing such a sweeping Desolation upon them, for their obstinate and aggravated Wickedness: And by his Faith in the promised Messiah, for the spiritual and eternal Blessings, which were to be brought in by, and found alone in him, (of which the Ark, for the Safety of all that were in it, was an eminent Type) he, as to be an Inheritor of Salvation, was interested in that Righteousness of Christ, which is received by Faith, and imputed for Righteousness unto the Justification of all that believe in him, without Difference. (*Rom.* iii. 21—26.)

8 By Faith Abraham when he was called to go out into a Place which he should after receive for an Inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

8. It was by Faith, that the renowned Patriarch *Abraham*, of whom the *Jews* boast, and from whom they derive their Pedigree and all their Privileges, and who is stiled the *Friend of God*, and *the Father of all them that believe*, (Jam. ii. 23, and Rom. iv. 11) when he had a Call from God to go forth from *Ur* of the *Chaldees*, his own native Country, and to leave his idolatrous Kindred and his Father's House, and every Thing that was dear unto him there, (*Gen.* xi. 31, and xii. 1) and to remove to another Country, which God would show him, even the Land of *Canaan*, (Gen. xii. 5) which he himself should receive, *in Right and Title*, by the free Gift of God, (*Gen.* xv. 7) and which his Posterity after him, for Generations to come, should receive *in Possession*, as an Inheritance, (*Gen.* xii. 7, and *Acts* vii. 5) that was typical of a better in Heaven; It was, I say, by a noble Act of mere Faith, that *Abraham* yielded a chearful Obedience to the Command of God, as being fully satisfied that what God had promised, his Faithfulness, Power and Goodness would certainly perform in his own Way and Time; and thereupon he readily departed from his own Country, Friends and Relations, and set out for some other Place, which God might direct him to; though, at that Time, he neither knew the Way to it, nor what Country it should be; God for the greater Trial of his Faith, and for putting the higher Honour upon it, having concealed this from him, till after he had left *Ur* of the *Chaldees*. (See the Note on *Acts* vii. 2.)

9 By Faith he sojourned in the Land of Promise, as in a strange Country, dwelling in Tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the Heirs with him of the same Promise.

9. It was by Faith, that he afterward wandered about, like a Pilgrim and Stranger, in the Land of *Canaan*, which by this Time God had told him was the Land, that he meant to give his Seed for an Inheritance, in the Promise he had made to him. (*Gen.* xii. 7.) Here he sojourned, as one exposed to Difficulties and Dangers, but depending on divine Protection in a foreign Country, the Inhabitants of which

which were quite different from himself, in Temper, Religion and Manners; he dwelling among them, not in any settled Habitation, but in Tents, which were fastned to the Ground by Stakes and Cords, and were moveable from Place to Place, as Occasions required; and which, under divine Direction, he often took down in one Place and pitched again in another, for the present Accommodation of himself and Family. And after his Son *Isaac* and his Grandson *Jacob* were born, they lived with him in like Tents, and in a like wandering State; even they, who as his Offspring, were Heirs, together with himself, of one and the same Promise, which God made to him and his Seed. And as this was a lively Emblem of the State of all true Believers, who are Pilgrims and Strangers on Earth; so the Father of the Faithful was well satisfied with his Condition, as an unsettled Sojourner, without any Possession in the Land of his Pilgrimage, beyond a burying Place which he bought of the Sons of *Heth*. (Gen. xxiii. 3, 4, &c. and xxv. 10, compared with *Acts* vii. 5.)

10 *For he looked for a City which hath Foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God.*

10. For God having said to him, *Fear not, Abraham, I am thy Shield and thy exceeding great Reward*; and having promised in an everlasting Covenant that he would be *his God, and the God of his Seed*, and that in *his Seed*, meaning the Messiah, *all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed*, (Gen. xv. 1, and xvii. 7, and xxii. 18) his Faith, resting on those gracious Words and Promises of a God, who cannot lie, looked further than that earthly Inheritance to the heavenly one, which was typified by it; and this he, in the Exercise of his Faith, most of all desired, ultimately expected, and firmly hoped to enjoy in that better State, which for its Security, Privileges, Grandeur and Glory, Regularity and Order, Largeness and Affluence of all sublime Riches, Honours and Delights, may well be emphatically called *a City*; and which for its Strength, Firmness and Duration, in Opposition to Tents and Tabernacles, and indeed in Opposition to all the Cities of this World, that are liable to be overthrown, and will moulder away by length of Time, may be said, with the greatest Propriety and Eminence, to be built upon solid and immoveable Foundations; such as the unchangeable Purpose and Promises of God, and the Merit and Mediation of the promised Messiah, *whose Day Abraham saw, and was glad*; (John viii. 56) the Contriver, Former and Finisher of which City, as its divine and only Architect and Erecter, is no less than the great and blessed God himself, who, by his own infinite Wisdom, Power and Goodness, prepared it from the Foundation of the World, to be the Habitation of his own Glory, and of all his Saints with him for ever; (*Mat.* xxv. 34) and so 'tis *a Building of God, an House, not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens.* (2 Cor. v. 1.)

11. It

11 Through Faith also Sara herself received Strength to conceive Seed, and was delivered of a Child when she was past Age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

11. It was by Faith also that even *Sarah* herself, (καὶ αὐτὴ Σάῤῥα) the beloved Wife of *Abraham*, being recovered from her Unbelief *, which she manifested by laughing, when she first heard the Promise of her having a Son, (*Gen.* xviii. 12—14) was miraculously invigorated, and enabled, beyond all Expectation, and all ordinary Operations of natural Causes, to conceive a Male Child in the common Way of Generation; and she was in due Season safely delivered of a Son, to whom, as her Offspring, the Covenant of Promises to *Abraham* was designed to be fulfilled; (*Gen.* xvii. 21, and xxi. 12) and by Faith she received this Ability to conceive and bear a Son, after she had all along been barren and dead, as to any Power of this Kind before, (*Gen.* xi. 30, and *Rom.* iv. 19) and had now lived (being ninety Years old, *Gen.* xvii. 17) past the usual teeming Age. This wonderful Strength for conceiving, and undergoing all the Agonies of Labour and Travail unto the bringing forth of *Isaac*, was granted her, not for her Faith, as though that were the meritorious Cause of it; but by means of her Faith, which was graciously owned and honoured, as she trusted in the Lord, that he, to whom nothing is too hard to do, as he told her, (*Gen.* xviii. 14) and who is Truth itself, and had made her a Promise of a Son, would faithfully perform it.

12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many *as the Stars of the Sky in Multitude, and as the Sand*

12. Therefore, in answer to her's, as well as *Abraham's* Faith, there descended a vast Progeny, even from his own single Person by her; and *that* from him, when he himself, being an hundred Years old, (*Gen.* xvii. 17) was by reason of that great Age accounted to be as much past begetting any Children, as though he had been actually dead ||. And the

* When *Sarah* first heard the Promise of the Lord, the Angel of the Covenant, that *she should have a Son*, she, as well as *Abraham*, might probably take him to be only some Stranger of the human Race, who came with two others that Way: It seems that she did not see him, the Door of the Tent being between him and her, when he spake these Words; and as they contained a Promise of what appeared to her an Impossibility in her Circumstances, she secretly laughed within herself, in a Way of deriding it: But when the Lord reproved her for such an incredulous Manner of Laughing, by which she perceived that he, who knew what she had done in Secret, was more than a Man; and when he back'd his Reproof with saying, *Is any Thing too hard for the Lord? At the Time appointed will I return unto thee according to the Time of Life, and Sarah shall have a Son*, then *Sarah* was afraid, as repenting of what she had said; and yet, in the Fright, Surprize, Flutter and Hurry of her Mind, denied it: But it seems that, upon the Whole, and especially after the further Discovery which the *Lord*, who spoke to her, had made of himself as *the true Jehovah*, in his Conversation immediately afterward with *Abraham*, she believed the Promise, as given by him, who was able to make it good. And this is what our Apostle refers to, without taking any Notice of her preceding Unbelief, which, together with her Falshood, was mercifully pardoned for the sake of that promised Seed, the Messiah, who proceeded from the Loins of *Isaac*, the Child she afterwards conceived and brought forth. (See and compare the Account given of these Things in the xviiith and former Part of the xxist Chapter of *Genesis*.)

|| The Resolution of the Difficulty which arises from what is here said concerning *Abraham*, that he was *as good as dead*, and from his many Years afterwards (as is generally thought) having had several Children by *Keturah* another Wife, *Gen.* xxv. 1, is attempted, most commonly, by supposing that God *miraculously* renewed the Vigour of *Abraham*'s, as well as of *Sarah*'s Body, through their Faith; and that this continued to *Abraham* many Years afterwards.—But Mr. *Hallet*, in his Suppliment to Mr. *Peirce*'s Paraphrase and Notes on this Epistle, supposes, and has taken a great deal of pains to prove,

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which is by the Sea-shore innumerable.

the prodigious Multitude that, in succeeding Generations, proceeded from his Loins in a Descent from *Isaac*, was, to speak in a proverbial Way, as numerous as the Stars of Heaven, according to Gods Promise to him; (*Gen.* xv. 5) yea, as he afterwards expressed it in another Promise, (*Gen.* xxii. 17) they were like the Grains of Sand on the Sea-shore, which are past all Account.

13 *These all died in Faith, not having received the Promises; but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of* them, *and embraced* them, *and confessed that they were Strangers and Pilgrims on the Earth.*

13. All these last mentioned Believers, *Abraham*, *Sarah*, *Isaac* and *Jacob* *, not only lived by Faith, which was their great Support under all Difficulties and Trials; but their Faith (as all Faith that is of a right Kind does) held out to the End of their Days; and they died in a lively and comfortable Exercise of it, with respect to Blessings thereafter to be enjoy'd by themselves in a better World, as well as by their Posterity in this; they not having been actual Partakers of the great and good Things promised, neither for themselves, nor for their Offspring, as they not only had not received Possession of the promised Land of *Canaan*, nor lived to see innumerable Descendents from them; but, (which their Faith principally pitch'd upon) as they were not yet arrrived at the heavenly State of Blessedness and Glory, nor had seen the promised Saviour actually sent into the World, which was the great Blessing ultimately intended and realized by Faith in the Promises: But they saw them,

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(and I think with fair Probability) that *Moses*'s History of *Abraham*'s marrying *Keturah* is not set in the exact chronological Order, because he prudently chose to finish the Account of *Sarah* and her Son *Isaac*, without interrupting it with the Affair of *Keturah*, which was foreign to this Point, but proper to be afterwards taken Notice of. This Writer likewise gives several other Instances, in which the Order of Time is not observed in the sacred History, as it frequently is neglected with good Judgment in many other Authors of Note; and by comparing the several Parts of the Narration in *Genesis*, he concludes that *Abraham*'s Children by *Keturah* were really born before this, which he had by *Sarah*. Curious Enquirers may consult his very large and elaborate Note on this Verse; and if his Thought be admitted, the whole Difficulty for reconciling these Passages is effectually removed at once.

* *All these* is not to be understood as including *Abel, Noah*, and *Enoch*: For *Enoch* did not die, but was translated that he should not see Death, as had been said, *ver.* 5; and though *Abel* and *Noah* died, as well as lived in Faith, yet they can't be referred to by the Words *all these*. For 'tis expresly said, *ver.* 15, of the Persons here intended, that *if they had been mindful of that Country, from whence they came out, they might have had Opportunity to have returned*, which can be applied only to *Abraham* and *Sarah*, who in their own Persons came out of *Ur* of the *Chaldees*, (*Gen.* xi. 31) and to *Isaac* and *Jacob*, who as reckon'd to, and included in their Parents, might be said to come out from thence, in like Manner as *Joseph*'s two Sons, which were born in *Egypt*, were reckoned to the *Souls of the House of Jacob, which came into Egypt*, to make up the Number of threescore and ten, (*Gen.* xlvi. 27.) and as God speaks of *Israel*'s coming out of *Egypt*, (Hag. ii. 5.) many Ages after he brought their Ancestors out of that Land; and as *Abraham* and *Sarah*, so *Isaac* and *Jacob* were said in our foregoing Context, *ver.* 9, to be *Heirs of the same Promise*, to which, together with the Promise of an innumerable Seed like the Stars, and the Sand upon the Sea-shore, *ver.* 11, 12, the *Promises*, in the Faith of which they died, most naturally refer: And as *Canaan* was an eminent Type of *Heaven*, and the *Messiah* was the great and capital Blessing intended in the Promise of the Seed, which should spring from *Abraham* and *Sarah*; so the Faith in which they, inclusive of *Isaac* and *Jacob*, lived and died, ultimately respected the *heavenly* Inheritance, which they looked for and desired, *ver.* 10, 16; as also the Messiah, *in whom all Nations should be blessed*: For we are told, *Gen.* xv. 5, 6, the Place here referred to, that the Lord *brought Abraham abroad, and said, look now towards Heaven, and tell the Stars, if thou canst number them, so shall thy Seed be; and he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him for Righteousness*, which the Apostle interprets with relation to *Abraham*'s Faith in the Messiah for Justification, saying, *Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for Righteousness.* (Rom. iv. 3.)

especially relating to the Messiah, by an Eye of Faith, as Things which certainly would be accomplished, not immediately, but at a great Distance of Time to come; and they understood the Meaning of them, and discerned something of the Wisdom, Power, Grace and Faithfulness of God, that shone forth in the Promises of them: And they were fully convinced and satisfied in their own Minds, that they were the true Sayings of God, and should infallibly be fulfilled in due Season: And thereupon they fiducially and affectionately received, and joyfully embraced them, in their special Reference to the Messiah, and to all heavenly Happiness through him, as Things of the most excellent Nature and of the highest Importance: And under this believing View, Persuasion and cordial Reception of them, they freely and boldly own'd, in Word and Deed, and were willing to have it publicly known, as is expresly recorded of *Abraham* and *Jacob*, (Gen. xxiii. 4, and xlvii. 9) that they looked upon themselves, not as at home in this World; but as, in a spiritual Sense, Aliens and Foreigners, whose Hearts and Hopes, Interest and Happiness, were not placed on any of its Concerns, and as Travellers, like Pilgrims, passing through the Earth, even as, in a literal Sense, they severally were in the Land of *Canaan:* All which was a lively Emblem of the State of God's People in this World; every one of them may well say with Propriety, as *David* did, *I am a Stranger with thee, and a Sojourner, as all my Fathers were,* (Ps. xxxix. 12.)

14 *For they that say such Things, declare plainly that they seek a Country.*

14. For these antient Saints, and all who, with like Faith in the Promises, speak of themselves as Strangers and Pilgrims on the Earth, do hereby both professedly and constructively make it manifest to all about them, that, instead of setting their Affections on this World, or rating their Happiness by it, or wishing to have their Portion, and to live always in it, they keep in View, desire, hope for, and earnestly seek after their heavenly Father's Country, (πατρίδα ἐπιζητοῦσι) a large and delightful Place of abode, which, as his Children by spiritual Birth, is their own native home, where they shall dwell with him for ever.

15 *And truly if they had been mindful of that* Country, *from whence they came out, they might have had Opportunity to have returned:*

15. And to shew that the Country, which they so diligently sought, and were going to, was not their former Home in another Country upon Earth, 'Tis very certain that, if they had been thoughtful about, hankering after, and desirous to return to *Ur* of the *Chaldees*, their original Country, and to their dear Friends, Relations and Possessions there, from which, in Obedience to God's Command, *Abraham* and his Wife, and *Isaac* and *Jacob* (as included in them, and afterwards approving of what they had done) cheerfully departed to go into the promised Land of *Canaan*, they had Time and Liberty enough, and might easily have found Means and Conveniences for going back with Safety thither;

ther; the Way to it being ſhort, and eaſy; and there being none that would have oppoſed the Attempt.

16 But now they deſire a better Country, *that is, an heavenly. Wherefore God is not aſhamed to be called their God: For he hath prepared for them a City.*

16. But now, even while they had Opportunity, if they choſe it, of returning to the Land of the *Chaldees*, all their Deſire (as that of every true Believer does) tended to, and ultimately center'd in, a nobler Settlement in the tranſcendently more excellent World, that is of a different and ſublimer Nature, more ſatisfying, glorious and abiding, than that Country, which they had left, and would not return to; or than that, in which they now were Strangers and Pilgrims; or indeed than any other, the moſt pleaſant that can be imagined upon Earth; and this is no other than Heaven itſelf *, which is *an Inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.* (1 Pet. i. 4.) And as their Hearts were ſo ſet upon their heavenly Inheritance, in Preference to all others; and their Faith was *the Evidence of Things not ſeen*, as well as *the Subſtance of Things hoped for*; (ver. 1) ſo in Conſequence of this, though not for any Merit in it, God in his infinite Condeſcenſion and Love does not diſdain, or think it any Diſhonour to himſelf, to be in a peculiar and diſtinguiſhing Manner their Covenant-God and Father; as he would, if he had nothing better to beſtow upon them, than the good Things of this World; and eſpecially, if he left them in afflicted Circumſtances, ſo deſtitute of thoſe Comforts, as they were all their Days: But he, on the contrary, counts it his Glory to be their God, and to be claimed, and called upon by them, as ſuch, and to be publicly known by this Title in the World, as appears by his ſaying to *Moſes* (Ex. iii. 6, 15) *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob. This is my Name for ever, and this is my Memorial unto all Generations.* And he has given the fulleſt and ſtrongeſt Evidence of his being their God, and owning himſelf to be ſo: For, according to his ſpecial Relation to them, and their Faith and Hope in him, he has graciouſly appointed, laid out, framed and fitted up (ἡτοίμασε) a glorious City of Habitation for their whole Perſons, Soul and Body, † to dwell in with himſelf, even a *Building*

* This carries the higheſt Evidence that the *Patriarchs* had a Revelation, and Promiſes of a future State of Glory in Heaven: For otherwiſe they could not have looked by Faith *for a City, whoſe Builder and Maker is God,* as it is ſaid they did, *ver.* 10. Nor could they have had ſuch Notions of it, to engage their earneſtly deſiring and ſeeking after it, as we are here, and *ver.* 14, told they did. And though *Canaan* was an eminent *Type* of Heaven; yet that Land itſelf could not be the *heavenly Country* here intended; for this is called *a better Country,* in Oppoſition to that, in which they were now Pilgrims, and which they themſelves never did enjoy; and God himſelf is ſaid to be *the Builder and Maker* of the City, (*ver.* 10) which *he prepared for them,* in this heavenly Country; whereas *Jeruſalem* in the Land of *Canaan* was built by the Hands of Men; and theſe Patriarchs had no Notice given them, that God would ever prepare ſuch a City for their own Poſſeſſion; nor could they have any Expectation that they themſelves ſhould ever enjoy it: But their Faith looked to the *heavenly Inheritance,* which God has prepared for them that love him.

† God's ſaying to *Moſes, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob,* long after they were dead, is alledged by our Lord himſelf, as a Proof of the Reſurrection of the Saints to

Building of God, an Houſe not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens. (2 Cor. v. 1. See the Note there.)

17 By Faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Iſaac: And he that had received the Promiſes, offered up his only begotten Son;

17. Now, to return particularly to the Faith of *Abraham*, in ſome remarkable After-actings of it under the moſt difficult and trying Circumſtances; When *Abraham* had in the forementioned miraculous Manner obtained a Son by his Wife *Sarah*, (ver 11, 12) and was, for the moſt eminent Trial and Proof of the Sincerity and Strength of his Faith, Love and Obedience, called to offer him up as a Burnt-Offering to God, and to ſacrifice him with his own Hand, even his beloved Son *Iſaac* *, (Gen. xxii. 1, 2) He readily obey'd the divine Order, ſo as in good earneſt to reſolve, and do what in him lay, to execute it, notwithſtanding all that Unbelief might have ſuggeſted againſt it; and, having prepared all Things for it, he would actually have ſlain him, as he was juſt at the Point of doing, had not a Counter-Command, by an immediate Voice from Heaven at that very Inſtant, prevented it. (*Gen.* xxii. 11, 12.) And this great Believer, who had been favoured with, and had embraced and firmly depended upon, the Promiſes of what great and good Things God would do for him and his Seed, and eſpecially upon the grand comprehenſive Promiſe, which was often repeated, relating to the coming of the Meſſiah himſelf through *Iſaac*'s Loins, did nevertheleſs, by another Act of Faith on the ſupreme and indiſputable Authority of God, as commanding it, freely reſign and offer him up as a Sacrifice to the Lord, in the Manner before-mentioned, even this his dearly beloved and only begotten Son by *Sarah*, and the only Son of his Hopes, according to the

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to eternal Life; *Mat.* xxii 32; (See the Note there) and ſo God's *preparing for them a City* includes a Reſurrection of the Body to immortal Glory, as well as the Happineſs of the Soul in the full Enjoyment of God to all Eternity. Accordingly ſome of the antient Believers are ſpoken of, as expecting to obtain *a better Reſurrection*; (ver. 35) and therefore they, being the Sons of God, might well be ſaid to *wait for the Adoption*, to wit, *the Redemption of the Body*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of New Teſtament-Believers. *Rom.* viii. 23.

* Though *Abraham* was prevented executing his Deſign, in offering up *Iſaac*; yet he fully intended it, ſet about it, and would undoubtedly have done it, in Obedience to the divine Command, had he not been reſtrained at the critical Juncture by a Voice from Heaven; and his proceeding ſo far, as he did in the Integrity of his Heart, was accepted in the divine Conſtruction, as if he had actually ſlain him, as appears from the Reaſon that is given of the Prohibition in the next Words; for *now I know that thou fearest God, ſeeing thou haſt not withheld thy Son, thine only Son from me.* (Gen. xxii. 9—12.)—The Enemies of divine Revelation have made hideous Outcries againſt this Command of God, and *Abraham*'s Obedience to it. But though it would have been indeed a murderous Act in *Abraham* to ſacrifice his Son, unleſs he had received a poſitive Command from God for it; and though, without this divine Warrant, neither his Piety toward God, nor his natural Affection, eſpecially to ſuch a Son, would have ſuffered him deliberately to deſign and go about it; yet as he was ſure that God had commanded it, and as God has an abſolute and uncontrollable Right to order the taking away of any Man's Life by what Means or Inſtruments he pleaſes, by the Knife, or the Sword, as well as by the Peſtilence and other Diſeaſes, what *Abraham* did, and was about to do, was every way both juſtifiable and commendable, as it was a mere Act of the higheſt and moſt ſelf-denying Obedience to God's plain Command. And this can never be drawn into a Precedent, for any one, that has no ſuch plain and expreſs Command from God, to take away the innocent Life of another, any more than a private Perſon can be warranted to kill another, without the Authority of the Civil Magiſtrate, who has a Right to order his Executioner to put Criminals to Death.

Promiſes

Promiſes, which were to be fulfilled by means of this Son, or not at all.

18 Of whom it was ſaid, That in Iſaac ſhall thy Seed be called:

18. Concerning which very Son, God, to comfort *Abraham* at his being obliged to part with *Iſhmael*, ſaid to him, *(Gen.* xxi. 12.) *In Iſaac ſhall thy Seed be called*; thereby aſſuring him, that it was not by the Son of *Hagar* the Bond-Woman, nor by any other of his own Sons; but only by this Son of *Sarah* the Free-Woman, *(Gal.* iv. 30.) that the Promiſe ſhould be fulfilled, which he had made of an innumerable Poſterity, that ſhould be called to inherit both temporal and ſpiritual Bleſſings, and particularly the great Promiſe of the Meſſiah's proceeding from his Loins according to the Fleſh, in whom his ſpiritual Seed of all Nations ſhould be bleſſed, through Faith in him.

19 Accounting that God was able to raiſe him *up, even from the Dead; from whence alſo he received him in a Figure.*

19. But notwithſtanding all thoſe heavy Damps upon his own Love to, and believing Hopes about this Son of the Promiſe, and all thoſe ſeeming Inconſiſtencies with the Promiſe itſelf, which was the moſt touching and grievous Trial of his Faith that can be imagined, he made no Difficulty of reſolving, and attempting to do what God had commanded him, in this moſt unaccountable Inſtance; he having reaſoned and concluded (λογισάμενος) in the Exerciſe of his Faith, that if he were to obey the divine Order in ſacrificing his Son, God, to whom all Things are poſſible, could eaſily raiſe him up to Life again; and, in caſe the Promiſe could not otherwiſe be fulfilled, would certainly give him back to him by a timely Reſurrection, even from the Dead; from whence, to ſpeak in a figurative Way, (ἐν παραβολῇ) he accordingly did receive him to Life, who had been in the very Article of Death, devoted to it, and given up as a dead Son without the leaſt Hope to the contrary: And as he had before received him from his own and *Sarah*'s dead Bodies, as it were from the Dead; ſo this was receiving him again in the Similitude of a Reſurrection from the Dead, and *that* as a Type of the Death and Reſurrection of Chriſt, the only begotten Son of God, and of the Reſurrection of true Believers to eternal Life, through him.

20 By Faith Iſaac bleſſed Jacob and Eſau concerning Things to come.

20. It was by Faith in the Promiſe of God to *Iſaac* himſelf, *(Gen.* xxvi. 4.) as well as to his Father *Abraham* and his Seed; and in the divine Suggeſtion, which ſecretly directed his Mind and Lips to give forth prophetic Predictions to his two Sons, * that he firſt, though unwittingly as to *the*

* Though it muſt be acknowledged, that *Rebecca*'s artful and fallacious Management, to obtain the Bleſſing for *Jacob*, (Gen. xxvii. 6—24.) was by no Means juſtifiable, or fit to be imitated in any other Caſe; yet God over-ruled it, in his infinitely wiſe and holy Providence, for fulfilling his own gracious Purpoſe and Promiſe relating to *Jacob*, as he did the Conſpiracies of the *Jews* againſt Chriſt, for bringing about the great Work of Redemption by him, *Acts* ii. 23. And though *Iſaac*, either not having heard, or not underſtood, or not duly attended to, God's Declaration to *Rebecca*, that *the elder ſhould* *erve the younger*, (Gen. xxv. 23) deſigned to bleſs *Eſau*, as the Firſt-born, but through Deception bleſſed

the Perſon he was then ſpeaking to, pronounced, according to God's own ſovereign Determination, the chief Bleſſing upon *Jacob* his younger Son, which naturally belonged to the Firſt-born, and included ſuch as were both temporal and ſpiritual; and afterwards, he, by the ſame prophetic Spirit, pronounced only the Bleſſings of this World upon *Eſau*; both which Benedictions related to Things, which he believed would take Place upon their reſpective Offsprings for Generations to come, and which were accordingly fulfilled in *Covenant*-Mercies to *Jacob*, and *temporal* ones to *Eſau*.

21 *By Faith Jacob when he was a dying, bleſſed both the Sons of Joſeph; and worſhipped* leaning *upon the Top of his Staff.*

21. As *Jacob*, the Covenant-Son of *Iſaac*, lived; ſo he died, in an Exerciſe of Faith on the Promiſes of his God, who, by the Angel of the Covenant, *had been with him all his Life long, and redeemed him from all Evil*, and who he believed would bring his Poſterity to the Land of *Canaan*, and fulfil his Promiſes to them. (*Gen.* xlviii. 15, 16, 21.) 'Twas by this Faith, that the venerable Patriarch, when, through the Infirmities of extreme old Age, he was very feeble, and drew near to the Grave, prayed in a ſolemn Manner for, and by a prophetic Spirit foretold, Bleſſings that ſhould come upon his Grand-Children, *Ephraim* and *Manaſſeh*, the two Sons of *Joſeph*; and deſignedly croſſing his Hands, under divine Direction, ſo as to lay his Right Hand upon the Head of *Ephraim*, the younger Brother, who was placed at his Left, and his Left Hand on the Head of *Manaſſeh*, the elder, who was placed at his Right Hand, he pronounced a Bleſſing upon each of them, diſtinctly declaring, in humble Confidence that God would bleſs them, that though both ſhould be great, the younger ſhould be greater than the elder; (*Gen.* xlviii. 13—20.) and ſo it was in the Event, as it *afterward* appeared at the numbering of the Tribes, when *Ephraim*'s was found to be greater than *Manaſſeh*'s. (*Numb.* i. 32—35.) And *Jacob* ſolemnly worſhipped God, * in the moſt reverent Poſture he

bleſſed *Jacob*, inſtead of him, *Gen.* xxvii. 21—29; yet he might bleſs him with Faith in the Promiſe, which God had made to *himſelf*, that he would *make his Seed to multiply, as the Stars of Heaven, and that in his Seed ſhould all the Nations of the Earth be bleſſed*; (Gen. xxvi. 4.) and he might bleſs *Jacob* as firmly believing that the immediate Impulſe, he was under to bleſs the Son then before him, was indeed from God, and that God would certainly confer the Bleſſing, which he was prompted to pronounce upon him in a Way of Prayer and Prophecy: Accordingly when he afterwards found that, contrary to his own Intention, he had bleſſed *Jacob* inſtead of *Eſau*, his Faith intirely acquieſced in it, ſaying, *I have bleſſed him, yea, and he ſhall be bleſſed.* (Gen. xxvii. 33.)—This prophetic benediction included *ſpiritual*, as well as, yea, more than temporal Bleſſings: For *Jacob*'s whole Life was full of Troubles, and neither he, nor his Poſterity in general, had ſo much Affluence of temporal Advantages, as *Eſau* and his Seed had. But *Jacob*'s Bleſſing was that of the Covenant-Birthright in *Abraham*'s Family, which included, not only a Promiſe of the Land of *Canaan*, but alſo of the Meſſiah, and of the ſpiritual Bleſſings which ſhould be derived from him, as that Seed of *Abraham*, in whom all Nations ſhould be bleſſed. And therefore *Eſau* is called *a prophane Perſon*, which intimates an irreligious Temper in him, for ſelling this Birthright. (*Heb.* xii. 16. See the Note there) Accordingly the Bleſſing, which *Iſaac* afterward pronounced upon him, *Gen.* xxvii. 39, 40, was merely of a *temporal* Nature.

* This Paſſage is quoted from *Gen.* xlvii. 31, which we tranſlate *Iſrael bowed himſelf upon the Bed's Head*. But as the *Hebrew* Word (מטה) rendered *Bed* ſignifies, according to different Pointings, a *Bed*,

he could, by bowing his Head, and ſupporting himſelf on the Top of his Staff.

22 By Faith Joſeph when he died, made mention of the departing of the Children of Iſrael; and gave Commandment concerning his Bones.

22. To take Notice of only one Inſtance more in the Period of Time from *Noah* to *Moſes*, It was by Faith in the Promiſe made to *Abraham*, (*Gen.* xv. 13, 14.) that *Joſeph*, one of the darling Sons of *Jacob*, whoſe Faith held out amidſt all the Adverſity and Proſperity he had paſſed through in *Egypt*, when he drew near his End recollected, and reminded his Brethren, for the Encouragement of their *Faith, which is the Evidence of Things not ſeen*, (ver. 1.) that though he, who had been their Protector, was ſoon to die, and after his Deceaſe they would be expoſed to great Hardſhips and Oppoſition from the *Egyptians*; yet God, in his appointed Time, would ſurely viſit them in his Faithfulneſs and Kindneſs, and bring them out of the Land of *Egypt*, and carry them *unto the Land, which he ſware to Abraham, to Iſaac, and to Jacob*: And as he firmly believed this; ſo, in Teſtimony of his Faith concerning it, (*Gen.* l. 24, 25.) he ſtrictly charged his Brethren, taking an Oath of them, to embalm his dead Body, and preſerve it in a ſafe Repoſitory, while they ſhould continue in *Egypt*; and that whenever God ſhould bring them out, as he ſurely would, from thence, and give them Poſſeſſion of the promiſed Land, they ſhould then take ſpecial Care to carry his Bones along with them, and bury them there; which Order he gave in Token of his Hope of a Reſurrection to the eternal Inheritance, of which the Land of *Canaan* was a ſignal Type, as well as that they would certainly be put into Poſſeſſion of that Land.

23 By Faith Moſes when he was born, was hid three Months of his Parents, becauſe they ſaw he was a proper Child; and they were not afraid of the King's Commandment.

23. When, by the good Providence of God, *Moſes*, that great and eminent Lawgiver, was born, who was to be a remarkable Type of Chriſt, as the great Ruler and Deliverer of *Iſrael*, and *the Prophet which the Lord their God would raiſe up unto them*, (Acts iii. 22.) It was by Faith that his Parents, the Father concurring with the Mother, concealed his Birth, and kept him in ſome private Place, till he was a Quarter of a Year old, waiting for a convenient Opportunity to diſpoſe of him in ſuch a Way, as God might direct them to, for the Preſervation of his Life in thoſe perilous Days. This they attempted by laying him in a Sort of Cradle, or open Cheſt, made of Bulruſhes, and plaiſtered

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or a *Staff*, the Apoſtle ſpeaks of it as a *Staff*, and ſo it ſtands in the Verſions of the *Syriack* and the *Seventy*; and it ſeems from all Circumſtances moſt natural to take it in this Senſe: For, according to the Hiſtory, *Iſrael*'s bowing himſelf in a Way of divine Adoration, here ſpoken of, was before he was ſick, and before he bleſſed *Joſeph*'s Sons, both of which are expreſsly ſaid to be *after* that and ſome other Things; *Gen.* xlvii. 31, and xlviii. 1, &c. And therefore he, moſt probably, was ſitting either on his Bedſide, or on a Couch, or in a Chair, under the Infirmities of decrepid old Age, which, in the Whole amounted to an hundred and forty-ſeven Years, *Gen.* xlvii. 28; and, that he might pay his Adorations in a bowing Poſture, he ſupported himſelf by leaning on the Top of his Walking Staff, as not being able to do it ſtanding, or kneeling.

with

with Slime or Pitch to prevent the Water's soaking into it; and then lodged it in a Cluster of Flags, which grew on the Brink of the River; where *Pharaoh*'s Daughter providentially coming, and seeing his Beauty, and hearing his Cries, was moved with Compassion towards him, and took Care of him, as though he had been her own Child. (*Ex.* ii. 1—10.) That which influenced his Parents to cast him upon Providence, in this Manner, for his Preservation was, because his Countenance struck them with Admiration, and engaged their tenderest Affection to him, when they observed that he was an extraordinary beautiful Child,* and very promising, by his surprisingly amiable Aspect, for some great Eminence in his Day; and so might prove the happy Instrument of *Israel*'s Deliverance out of their hard Bondage, which they believed would certainly be brought about by some *Hebrew*, whom God would raise up for that glorious Purpose, according to his Promises; and by Means of this Faith, and their fearing God rather than Man, they, like the religious Midwives, (*Ex.* i. 17.) were not afraid to run the Risk of their own Lives, by endeavouring to save the Life of this Son, and so exposing themselves to the Wrath of *Pharaoh* for disobeying his barbarous Edict, which he issued out †, commanding the Midwives and all his People to destroy every Male, that should be born of the *Hebrews*. (Ex. i. 15, 16, 22)

24 By Faith Moses, when he was come to Years, refused to be called the Son of Pharaoh's Daughter;

24. When this famous *Moses* himself grew up to Maturity of Stature, Age and Understanding, and to great Attainments in Wisdom, Learning and Dignity, and so became every Way truly great, (μεγας) by the Time he was forty Years old; (*Acts* vii. 22, 23.) It was by Faith in the Promises made to *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, his Covenant-Ancestors, and in the invisible Things of a better World, that he bravely despised and rejected the Honours and Advantages, even to his probably succeeding to the *Egyptian* Crown, that might arise from being look'd upon, own'd and treated, as the adopted Son of so great a Princess as *Pharaoh*'s Daughter: (See the Note on *Acts* vii. 23.) And he was de-

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* *A proper Child* (αστειον) signifies *an exceeding beautiful* or *comely Child*, and in *Acts* vii. 20. *Moses* is said to have been *exceeding fair*, (αστειον τω Θεω) which, literally render'd, as we have it in the Margin, signifies *fair to God*; and may intimate that he was *fair in the Sight of God*, or was of some *divinely beautiful Form* with an uncommon Lustre in his Countenance.

† At the Time of *Moses*'s Birth, *Pharaoh*'s cruel Edict for killing all the Male Children, that should be born to the *Hebrews*, was in full Force, and was, doubtless, executed, as far as possible, with the utmost Watchfulness and Severity; yet as no Subtilty or Power of Man can prevail against the Counsel of the Lord, whose Kingdom rules over all; so he took Care that the Blood-thirsty Design should not be brought to pass in cutting off *Moses*: And it is evident that afterward, by the over-ruling Providence of God, this Commandment of the King was some Way or other relaxed, or defeated; for otherwise the Israelites could not have so prodigiously increased, as they did, from the Time of the Birth of *Moses* to the Time of his being sent to bring them out of *Egypt*; he being then eighty Years old, as we are informed, *Ex.* vii. 7.

sirous to be known by the despicable Name of an *Hebrew*, notwithstanding all the Hardships and Disgrace, which that People were then subject to, rather than to abandon their God and their Religion, and to be spoken of and regarded under the high pompous Title of her Son: He accordingly quitted the Court, and all its Magnificence, and made the Concerns of his afflicted Brethren his own, as one who determined to take his Lot with them;

25 Choosing rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season;

25. Renouncing, with a generous Disdain, all those tempting Allurements to Flesh and Sense; because, in the Exercise of his Faith, he rather chose to undergo the severest Sufferings and Troubles with God's own peculiar People in their oppressed and calamitous Circumstances, than to gratify the Flesh with an Enjoyment of all the Grandeur, Affluence and sensual Pleasures of a pompous, idolatrous and luxurious Court, which were all defiling, uncertain, fading and perishing; which could be but of very short Continuance, and could not be indulged without sinning against God, and thereby exposing himself to everlasting Wrath and Ruin.

26 Esteeming the Reproach of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures of Egypt: for he had Respect unto the Recompence of the Reward.

26. Such was his Faith in the *Messiah*, who should spring from the Seed of *Abraham*, and be their Saviour, that, upon deliberately weighing, and putting in Balance the worst of Religion against the best of this World, he formed this Account, that the heaviest Contempt, Scorn and Derision, with all the Persecutions that naturally follow them, and were actually endured by the *Israelites*, or that could be inflicted upon himself for the Sake of Christ and his Faith in him, whom God would anoint to be the only spiritual and effectual Redeemer of his People, and on whom all their Reproaches and Sufferings ultimately fell, as he, their Head, accounts them to be done to himself: (*Acts* ix. 4.) All this, whatsoever others might think of it, he esteem'd to be a richer Gain for the Glory of God, and the Good of his Church and of his own Soul, than the greatest Emoluments, Products and Advantages of the fruitful Land, and splendid Court of *Egypt* could be to him, were they all in his own Possession: For he by Faith (ἀπέβλεπε) look'd off fron all those perishing Riches, on one Hand, and beyond all those temporal Hardships, on the other; and found the sweetest Support in his Hope of, and looking forward to, the immortal Crown of Glory, which he realized, as reserved for him in Heaven; and which he well knew would amply recompense, and abundantly more than make Amends for all the Reproaches, Wants and Sufferings he might undergo, for the Sake of a good Conscience, in his Pursuit of it. *

27. It

* This *Respect to the Recompense of Reward* could not relate to an Inheritance in the Land of *Canaan*, as some would suggest: For *Moses* had no divine Warrant to support his Faith and Hope of *personally* receiving

27 *By Faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the Wrath of the King: For he endured as seeing him who is invisible.*

27. It was accordingly by Faith in the Command and Pomise of God, when he sent him to deliver his People out of the Land of the *Egyptians*, and to bring them to a good Land, (*Ex.* iii. 6—12.) that, about forty Years after * he had fled from the Face of *Pharaoh* into the Land of *Midian*, (*Ex.* ii. 15, and vii. 7, compared with *Acts* vii. 23—30.) he returned to *Egypt*; and when *Pharaoh*, under the Heat of Resentment at the many Plagues which had been inflicted, said to him, *Get thou from me, and see my Face no more; for in that Day thou seest my Face thou shalt die*, *Moses* was so far from being terrified, that he replied with an unshaken Boldness of Faith, *Thou hast spoken well. I will see thy Face again no more*; (Ex. x. 28, 29.) and thereupon he immediately departed from the Presence of the King, and soon after took his final Leave of *Egypt*, to lead the Children of *Israel* out from thence, defenceless and unarmed as they were; he not being in the least daunted by the severe Threatnings of that haughty Monarch; no, nor afterwards by his mad Fury, when, like an enraged and merciless Tyrant, he followed the *Israelites* with a powerful Army to revenge himself upon them in their utter Destruction. Nothing of this Kind moved him, or made him afraid of *going forward in Obedience* to God's Command; (*Ex.* xiv. 15.) but he was bold and couragious, amidst all Difficulties and Dangers, while a mighty pursuing Host was behind them, and the Red-Sea before them; and in the Strength of his Faith he said to the People, Fear ye not; stand still, and see the Salvation of the Lord: (*Ex.* xiv. 13.) For he endured the Terrors of all outward Appearances of unavoidable Destruction in that Situation, with stedfast Courage and Resolution, (εκαρτερησε) as having as realizing Views of God by Faith, and as firm a Dependence upon his Goodness, Power and Faithfulness for Deliverance, as though with his bodily Eyes he had beheld him visibly present, to save them by his out-stretched Arm, *whom*, in his own Nature and Perfections, which are all spiritual, *no Man has seen, nor can see*. (1 *Tim.* vi. 16.)

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receiving the Reward; and he was never suffered to enter into that Land; but in case he had, he could not have expected greater Treasures of an earthly Nature there, than he formerly had the fairest Prospects of in *Egypt*; and he could never think it worth his while to expose himself to the greatest Reproaches and Persecutions for the Sake of an Exchange of these. This *Recompense of Reward* therefore, which he had a Respect to, is evidently the same with *the City, which has Foundations*, and the *heavenly Country*, that are spoken of, *ver.* 10, 16, as what his believing Ancestors had look'd for, and desired; and so shews that he, as well as they, had a Revelation of, and had Faith and Hope relating to, a future State of Happiness in Heaven: And this is called *the Recompense of Reward*, not as though it were merited, or earned, by any one's Faith, Sufferings and Obedience; but as it is a rich Gift of God, which he in infinite Wisdom and Grace freely bestows, for Christ's Sake, upon his suffering Servants in a Return of Blessings upon them, that over-balance all their Sufferings for him, and are chiefly conferred upon them after all their Trials are ended. (See *Rom.* vi. 23, and viii. 18.)

* This relates not to his first Flight from *Pharaoh*, when, upon his having slain the *Egyptian*, he feared that *Pharaoh* having heard of it would slay him; (*Ex.* ii. 14, 15.) but to his second Departure from *Pharaoh*, after he was sent to deliver the Children of *Israel* out of their Bondage, *Ex.* vii. 2.

28 Through Faith he kept the Passover, and the sprinkling of Blood, lest he that destroyed the First-born, should touch them.

28. It was by Faith in the Promises, that God would bring his People out of *Egypt*, and in the promised Messiah, who should spring from them, as also in the divine Institution of a standing, significant Ordinance, that *Moses* himself, in Obedience to God's Command, observed all the Rites of the Paschal Supper, and obliged the People of *Israel* to do the same, which was afterwards to be a Commemorative Sacrifice, through all Generations, of the Lord's passing over the Houses of the Children of *Israel*, when he smote the *Egyptians*; and was prefigurative of the redeeming Death of Christ, who as the Lamb of God, without Blemish and without Spot, was our *Passover sacrificed for us*: (1 *Cor*. v. 7. and 1 *Peter* i. 18, 19. And, by a like Exercise of Faith, he ordered that another * temporary Ordinance, annexed to the former, suitable to the then peculiar Circumstances of Things, should be carefully observed according to the Command of God, namely, that the Blood of the Paschal Lamb should be sprinkled upon the Lintels and Door-Posts of the Houses of the Children of *Israel*, for their Protection from the destroying Angel, to the End that (ἵνα) when he was cutting off all the First-born of *Egypt*, both Man and Beast, and should see the Blood upon the Houses of the *Israelites*, he might spare the First-born of both Sorts, that belonged to them. (*Ex*. xii. 7, 12, 13.)

29 By Faith they passed thro' the Red-Sea, as by dry Land: Which the Egyptians assaying to do, were drowned.

29. To conclude the Account of the wonderful Effects of *Moses*'s Faith, which brings the whole Affair of *Israel*'s Deliverance out of *Egypt* to its final and happy Period, It was principally by Means of his Faith, as depending upon the Power of God to make good his Word of Promise, in a Way of Obedience to his Command, that when he order'd him to lift *up his Rod, and stretch out his Hand over the Sea*, he did so; † and thereupon the Lord, in a miraculous Manner,

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* *Though sprinkling the Blood* of the Paschal Lamb be *significant*, in a typical Reference to the Application of the Blood of Christ, which is called *the Blood of sprinkling*, Heb. xii. 24, and all the Efficacy of which to our own Salvation depends upon its being applied to us; yet it seems to have been but a *temporary* Ordinance, suited to the then present Occasion: For the *Feast of the Passover* is spoken of, as a *perpetual Memorial and Ordinance throughout their Generations*, (Ex. xii. 14, 24—27.) and was accordingly kept in the most solemn Manner every Year; but we neither here, nor any where else, read of *sprinkling the Blood of the Paschal Lamb*, either as appointed of God, or practised by the *Israelites*, after this Time.

† *They passed through the Red-Sea* relates to the Children of *Israel*, who were spoken of in the preceding Verse; but their passing through it *by Faith* I am strongly inclined to think relates chiefly, if not only, to *Moses*'s Faith, rather than to their *own*: For it is only the eminent Effects of *his* Faith, that the Apostle speaks of all along before, from *ver*. 24, down to this Verse, none of which exceeded, if any of them equalled this; and the Generality of the *Israelites* are represented on this very Occasion, as excessively unbelieving and murmuring, and no Way commendable for their Faith, whatsoever some few amongst them, such as *Caleb* and *Joshua*, might be. (See *Ex*. xiv. 10—12.) And yet upon what *Moses* further told them from the Lord to silence their Fears, and upon their seeing the Waters miraculously divide at his stretching out his Hand with the Rod in it, (*ver*. 13—16.) their Faith was so far revived as to encourage them to venture into the broad open Channel of the Sea after him, who probably entered into it first as their Leader: But then the Deliverance was wrought, rather in Answer to

Manner, *cauſed the Sea to go back by a ſtrong Eaſt Wind all that Night, and divided its Waters*, in ſo much that the *Iſraelites*, encouraged by this aſtoniſhing Appearance of God for them, followed their Leader, and *went* after him *into the Midſt of the Red-Sea, as upon dry Ground*; *and the Waters were a Wall unto them on their Right Hand, and on their Left*, (Ex. xiv. 16, 21, 22.) 'till they all paſſed over from the *Egyptian* to the *Arabian* Shore, without the Loſs of one Soul among them, (See Univerſal Hiſtory, Vol. I. Page 505, &c. in the Note) which the *Egyptians*, *Pharaoh* and his huge Hoſt of Chariots and Horſemen attempting to do, as vainly preſuming without a divine Warrant, which *Moſes* had, that they might ſucceed therein, as well as the *Iſraelites*, were overwhelmed with the Waters, and drowned by the Sea's *returning to its Strength, and covering them*, as ſoon as *Moſes ſtretched forth his Hand over it* again, by a ſecond Command, which the Lord gave him ſo to do; and there remained not ſo much as one of them alive; (*Ex.* xiv. 23—28.) Which was a juſt Retaliation for the *Edict*, that ordered all the male Children of *Iſrael* to be drowned. (*Exod.* i. 22.)

30 By Faith the Walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compaſſed about ſeven Days.

30. To add another particular, or two, of the eminent Fruits of Faith, It was by Means of the Faith of *Joſhua*, *Caleb*, and others, (in the afterwards more believing Generation than the former had been) whereby they depended upon the Promiſe, Power and Veracity of God for giving them Poſſeſſion of the Land of *Canaan*, that when, according to his Command, the Prieſts on the ſeventh Day blew with the Trumpets of Rams Horns, and the People gave a loud Shout, the Walls of *Jericho*, a fortified City, miraculouſly fell down flat to the Ground, not by any Efficacy in the blowing and ſhouting themſelves, or by any human Force whatſoever; but merely by the immediate Power of God, which was exerted for that Purpoſe, at the very Inſtant of this appointed Signal; and a Breach was thereby made wide enough for the Army of *Iſrael* to go ſtrait forward, and enter into the City, and take it without Obſtruction. (See *Joſh.* vi. 1—20.)

31 By Faith the Harlot Rhahab pe-

31. It was by Faith in the God of *Iſrael*, as the Lord of Heaven and Earth, * who had given the Land of *Canaan* to his

to his Faith, than theirs, in their paſſing through the Red Sea.—This was called the *Red-Sea*, not from any *Redneſs* of its Waters or Sand, as ſome imagine; but it took that Name from its waſhing the Borders of *Eſau*'s Country, who was called *Edom*, which ſignifies *Red*. (See *Wells's* Geography of the Old-Teſtament, Vol. II. P. 90—95.)

* Here it may be proper to obſerve that the *officious Lie*, which *Rahab* the Harlot told for preſerving the Spies, *Joſ.* ii. 4—7, was the Effect, not of her *Faith*, but of her *pitiful Dread* of the King's Wrath. This Lie of hers was by no Means juſtifiable in any Conſiſtency with the eternal Law of Truth, and the Confidence that ought to be maintain'd between Man and Man; but it was no more to our Apoſtle's Purpoſe to take any Notice of this, in a Diſcourſe about the excellent and wonderful Effects of Faith, than it would have been to mention the *Prevarication and Falſhood* that were uſed for impoſing upon *Iſaac*, to procure his Bleſſing for *Jacob* inſtead of *Eſau*. (See the Note on *ver.* 20.) or than to have mentioned the *ſinful Infirmities*, that were mixed with the Faith of other Perſons, who ſtand

rished not with them that believed not, when she had received the Spies with Peace.

his favourite People, that *Rahab*, though she was a *Gentile*, and had been (πόρνη) a whorish Woman, escaped, together with all her Family, the general Slaughter which was made of the rest of the Inhabitants of *Jericho*, (Jos. vi. 21—25.) that obstinately disregarded, and rebelled against, though their Hearts melted and were filled with Terror at, the credible Accounts which they, as well as *Rahab*, had heard of God's wonderful Appearances for *Israel*, and of his having assured them, and confirmed it by the miraculous Deliverances and Victories he had already given them, that *Jericho*, together with the rest of the Land, should be put into their Possession: (*Josh.* ii. 9—11.) And when, notwithstanding all this, the *Canaanites*, through their Disobedience and Unbelief, sought to destroy the two Spies, which *Joshua* sent to take a Survey of the State of Things among them, this pious Woman gave evident Proof of the Sincerity and Power of her Faith, by receiving those Messengers into her House, and entertaining them in a kind and friendly Manner, and taking Care of them, that they might not fall into the Hands of their Enemies, who, by Order of the King of *Jericho*, made strict Enquiry after them, that they might apprehend and kill them, or deliver them up to him. (*Josh.* ii. 1—7.)

32 *And what shall I more say? For the Time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and* of *Barak, and* of *Samson, and* of *Jephthae*; of *David also, and Samuel, and* of *the Prophets:*

32. And what further Instances of the Power and Triumphs of Faith, need I add after all these, that have been already insisted upon? It would be almost endless to recite, and enlarge upon the many others, that might be named. I shall therefore only just mention some of them, which from the sacred History ye may easily recollect: For 'tis more than my Time, and the designed Limits of this Epistle would admit of, to go into a particular Narrative of the Faith of *Gideon* * and its wonderful Effects, who believed

stand in this List And though, as *Rahab* was afterwards incorporated with the Church of *Israel*, and married to, and by that Means became herself one of the Ancestors of the Messiah, (*Mat.* i. 5.) we may well suppose that then, at least, she repented, and believed in him for the Pardon of this and all her other Sins, and for Justification to eternal Life. Yet it appears to me that her Faith here spoken of, and proved to be sincere by her Care of the Spies, related not to her spiritual and eternal Salvation; (See the Note on *James* ii. 21.) but only to the temporal Safety of herself and Family, as she really believed, according to the Report she had heard, that the *Jehovah of Israel was the God of Heaven above, and in the Earth beneath, and had given them that Land,* (Josh. ii. 9—13.)

* The Persons mentioned in this Verse are not recited just in the Order of Time, in which they lived, that being of no Importance to the Apostle's Argument: For *Baruk* lived before *Gideon*, and *Samson* before *Jephtha*, and *Samuel* before *David*; nor are the Effects of their Faith laid down in the following Verses, with any exact Reference to them in the same Order, in which he has here named them, as though the first of these Effects were to be applied to the Faith of the first of these Persons, and the next to the second, and so on; nor are they all to be confin'd to these particular Persons, much less are they all to be ascribed to any *one* of them. It was sufficient that these noble Effects of Faith were found in one or other of the Old-Testament-Saints; and the Apostle's promiscuously setting down several Persons all-together by Name, with an Intimation of many more; and then reciting the Products of their Faith in a Cluster of them, with only just mentioning them, was admirably suited to give us the more striking and affecting View of the Efficacy of Faith, as it appeared in these various Fruits of it, and was found among so many Believers; leaving it to our own Thoughts to enlarge upon them, as in the Paraphrase.

and obeyed the Command of God to him, *to throw down the Altar of Baal, and cut down the Grove that was by it, and build* another *Altar to the Lord his God*, as also to engage, with only three hundred Men, the vast Army of the *Midianites*, consisting of an hundred thirty-five thousand, in Confidence of God's Promise of Victory, which was miraculously obtained only by the blowing of Trumpets, breaking of Pitchers, and carrying Lamps, and giving a Shout, according to the divine Command, saying, *The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon*. (Judg. vi. 14, 25—27, and vii. 7—25, and viii. 10.) And the Faith of *Barak*, who, depending on God's Promise by the Prophetess *Deborah*, obtained with only Ten Thousand Men a glorious Victory over the vastly superior and formidable Army of *Jabin*, the *Canaanitish* King, commanded by *Siserah*. (Judges iv. 4, 7—16.) And the Faith of *Samson*, who, being the Judge of *Israel*, believed the Lord would be with him when his Spirit came upon him, as a Spirit of Might and Courage, and enabled him to slay thirty *Philistines*, and afterward, three thousand of those Enemies to the State and to God himself, at his Death. (*Judg*. xiv. 19, and xvi. 27—30.) And the Faith of *Jephthe*, who believed that God, who had delivered *Israel* from other Enemies, and whose Spirit came upon him, as a Spirit of Courage, would drive out the *Ammonites* before him; and the Lord delivered them into his Hands, insomuch that they were intirely subdued. (*Judg*. xi. 23—33.) And the Faith of *David*, the Man after Gods own Heart, and the most excellent King of *Israel*, who in Times of the greatest Danger trusted in the Promises of God to bring him to the Throne; and all along afterward, generally speaking, to his dying day, maintained a firm and humble Dependence upon the Lord to fulfil his Covenant with him. (2 *Sam*. xxiii. 1—5.) And the Faith of *Samuel*, that eminent Prophet, who believed that there should be a Performance of every thing which had been told him from the Lord, whether in a Way of Judgment or Mercy, and that Miracles should be wrought in Confirmation of it, which accordingly came to pass. (1 *Sam*. xii. 16—25.) And the Faith of other holy Prophets, too many to be particularly specified, which is recorded in the Writings of the Old Testament, both with relation to the great Things that some of them *did*, and others bravely *suffer'd*, under the Power of it.

33 *Who through Faith subdued Kingdoms, wrought Righteousness, obtained Promises, stopped the Mouths of Lions,*

33. As to what great Things *they did*, Some of them by means of their Faith, which animated them in the Cause of God, reduced many Nations into Subjection to *Israel*, according to the Promises made to them; such as *Joshua*, who subdued all the Kingdoms in *Canaan*; and *David*, who subdued the *Moabites*, *Syrians* and *Edomites*, and other Nations round about. (*Josh*. viii. 1, 2, and 2 *Sam*. viii. 2, 6, 11, 12, 14.) Others of them, from a Principle of Faith, not only performed Acts of moral Righteousness in their private Capacities,

Capacities, but alſo ruled righteouſly in their public Characters, as did *Samuel*, while he judged *Iſrael*, and cou'd appeal to the People for the Equity and Impartiality of his Government; (1 *Sam.* vii. 15—17, and xii. 3.) and *David*, who in his public Adminiſtration diſcountenanced every Kind of Iniquity, cut off all wicked Doers, and ſet his Eyes upon the Faithful of the Land, that they might dwell with him and ſerve him. (*Pſ.* ci. throughout.) Others of them, by Means of their Faith in the Promiſes, which God gave them of his remarkably appearing for them, and doing great Things by them,* obtained the *actual Accompliſhment* of thoſe Promiſes. Others of them, through Faith in God, as the only living and true God, defeated and put a Stop to the Rage of devouring Lions, as *Daniel* did when, for his Fidelity to his God, he was caſt into the Lions Den, but ſuffered no Harm: (*Dan.* vi. 22, 23) and as *David* ſlew one Lion, and *Benaiah* another. (1 *Sam.* xvii. 35, 36, and 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 20.)

34 *Quenched the Violence of Fire, eſcaped the Edge of the Sword, out of Weakneſs were made ſtrong, waxed valiant in Fight, turned to Flight the Armies of the Aliens.*

34. Others of them, by means of their Faith, as truſting in the Lord, and committing themſelves to his ſovereign Diſpoſals in the Diſcharge of their Duty, reſtrained and bound up the Force and Fury of flaming Fire, as effectually for their own Preſervation from it, as if it had been actually quenched; an eminent Inſtance of which we have in the three young Men, *Shadrack*, *Meſhach*, and *Abednego*, who, for their reſolutely refuſing to worſhip the Golden Image which *Nebuchadnezzar* had ſet up, were caſt into the *burning fiery Furnace*, *ſeven times hotter* than it was wont to be made, and, after having continued for ſome Time in it, they came out unhurt; inſomuch that *not a Hair of their Heads was ſinged.* (Dan. iii. 13—27.) Others of them, through Faith in the divine Protection, as attending the Uſe of proper Means, retreated, and got away from the Reach and Power of the Sword of cruel Tyrants, who ſought to deſtroy them, as *Elijah* did from *Jezebel*, when ſhe ſware that ſhe would take away his Life. (1 *Kings* xix. 2, 3.) Others were recovered from Sickneſs, as *Hezekiah* was; (2 *Kings* xx. 1—7) or being weak in themſelves, and in Compariſon with the Forces of their Enemies, were nevertheleſs, thro' Faith in their God, ſurpriſingly ſtrengthened to maintain their Ground againſt them, and even to overcome them: They grew amazingly courageous, bold, daring and ſucceſsful in

* *The Promiſes* here meant ſeem to relate to *particular Promiſes*, which were made on ſpecial important Occaſions to ſeveral Perſons, ſuch as thoſe to *Joſhua*, *Gideon* and others, that they ſhould gain remarkable and complete Victories over the Enemies, againſt whom God ſent them; and to *David*, that he ſhould be raiſed to the Throne of *Iſrael*; and ſo their obtaining *the Accompliſhment* of the Promiſes of this Sort is no way inconſiſtent with its being ſaid, *ver.* 39, that *they received not the Promiſe*: For *that* relates to the grand Promiſe of God's raiſing up the Meſſiah, which was not fulfilled in their Days.

Battle;

Battle; Instances of which we have in *Gideon*, (See the Paraphrase on *ver.* 32) and in *David*, who trusting in the Name of the Lord of Hosts, slew *Goliah*, the monstrous Champion of the *Philistines*; (1 *Sam.* xvii. 45—51) so that, contrary to all human Probability, they in the Strength of their Faith drove their Enemies back, and forced the numerous Armies of the Nations of strange Languages, and of different Manners and Religion, to flee before them.

35 *Women received their Dead raised to Life again: And others were tortured, not accepting Deliverance, that they might obtain a better Resurrection.*

35. As to the *weaker Sex*; Even pious Women, by means of their Faith, had their dead Children miraculously restored to them by a Resurrection to the present Life again, as in the Case of the Widow of *Zarephath*, whose Son was recovered from Death to Life by the Faith of *Elijah*, whom she believed to be a Prophet of the Lord; (1 *Kings* xvii. 13—24) and the *Shunamitish* Woman, whose Son also was brought to Life from the Dead, by the Faith of *Elisha*, and *that* according to *her* Faith. (2 *Kings* xiv. 18—37.) All these are eminent Instances of the noble Achievements of Faith, in the great Things that were *done*, and the rich Advantages that were obtained by it. And its Power and Efficacy is no less conspicuous in what others have been enabled to *bear* and *suffer* with holy Fortitude, by means of their Faith. Many Believers were so strengthened and animated by their Faith, as to endure the greatest Tortures with exemplary Patience, for the sake of a good Conscience. They freely submitted to the severest Torments, even unto Death, by various Methods of Cruelty (some of which shall be pointed out, (*ver.* 37) as soon as we have taken Notice (*ver.* 36) of another Sort of Trials that were sustained by Faith.) These noble Martyrs courageously endured the most *exquisite Punishments* to the Loss of Life itself, and bore up with heroic Faith and Patience under them †; they rather choosing to submit to the worst of them all, than to accept of a Release from them upon any dishonourable Terms, as having in View and Hope a blessed Resurrection to eternal Life, which is incomparably better than any Deliverance in this World from the greatest Pains of Death, that could be inflicted upon them; and is every way better, than a Resurrection to a temporal Life, which the Sons of the two good Women, but now referred to, received by means of the Faith of their respective Mothers, and of the two Prophets.

36 *And others had Trial of* cruel *Mock-*

36. There were others of the faithful *Israelites*, who endured several Trials of their Faith in various Ways, though

† *Tortured* may refer not to any *particular Sort* of Punishment, that was inflicted, different from those exemplified, *ver.* 37, which, as every one knows, must needs have been, most of them at least, extremely tormenting. And I rather choose to take it in this Light, than to have Recourse, with the generality of Interpreters, to the *Apocryphal* Books for Instances of some peculiar Sort of Tortures; since all the other Instances, referred to in this Catalogue, might be collected from the authentic Scriptures of the Old Testament. (See Mr. *Hallet's* Supplement to Mr. *Peirce*, whom I have followed in many of the Particulars here referred to.)

not

ings, and Scourgings, yea moreover, of Bonds and Impriſonment.

not unto Death; ſuch as ſcornful, ludicrous Inſults, and ignominious Deriſions, (ἐμπαιγμων) which cannot but grate upon generous Minds, like thoſe that *Iſaac* met with from *Iſhmael*, and *Eliſha* from the rude and ſaucy Children, or young Men of *Bethel*. (Gen. xxi. 9, and 2 *Kings* ii. 23.) And others underwent the ſevere Diſcipline of being unmercifully beaten and abuſed for their Profeſſion of, and Adherence to their God; ſuch as our Lord refers to, ſaying, Some, that were ſent to the *Jews*, were *beaten*, or ſcourged: (*Mark* xii. 3, 5) * Yea, over and above all this, there were ſome, who, for the ſame glorious Cauſe were enabled, by their Faith, to bear with Patience the heavy Chains and Fetters that were put upon them, and all the Hardſhips of being thrown into Jails and Dungeons; ſuch as *Joſeph*, *Sampſon*, *Micaiah* and *Jeremiah*. (Gen. xxxix. 20, and xl. 3, *Judg*. xvi. 21, 1 *Kings* xxii. 27, and *Jer*. xxxvii. 15.)

37 They were ſtoned, they were ſawn aſunder, were tempted, were ſlain with the Sword: They wandered about in Sheep-ſkins, and Goat-ſkins; being deſtitute, afflicted, tormented;

37. As to thoſe that were tortured to Death, not accepting Deliverance, (*ver*. 35. See the Note there) Some of them, through the Stedfaſtneſs and lively Exerciſe of their Faith, gave themſelves up to be ſtoned to Death for their Religion; ſuch as *Naboth*, (1 Kings xxi. 13) and *Zechariah*, the Son of *Jehoiada*, (2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21) and thoſe referred to by our bleſſed Lord. (*Mat*. xxiii. 37.) Others of them cheerfully underwent the Cruelty of an Execution, by their Bodies being ſawn through the Middle, † a Barbarity that was too often uſed among the Antients. (2 *Sam*. xii. 31, and 1 *Chron*. xx. 3.) By the near Proſpects of ſuch terrible Deaths, as well as by various other Trials, many Confeſſors and Martyrs were ſorely tempted to deny their God, and worſhip Idols, which (had they complied with the Offers of their Enemies) might have ſaved them from thoſe Calamities: But, through the Vigour and Stedfaſtneſs of their Faith, they rather choſe to ſuffer the worſt that Men could do to them, than to be guilty of ſuch an abominable Sin. Some of them, who continued faithful to their God, notwithſtanding all the alluring and menacing Attempts of the Wicked to drive them away from him, were cut off by the Sword of Tyrants; ſuch as the holy Prophets of the Lord by the Sword of *Jezebel*, (1 Kings xix. 10) and *Uriah*, the Son of *Shemaiah*, who was ſlain by the Sword of King *Je-*

* Trial of *Scourgings* (μαστιγων) is indeed a different Word from that, which is render'd, *Mark* xii. 3, 5, *beat*, and *beating*; (ἔδειραν and δέροντες) but they are ſometimes uſed promiſcuouſly, one for the other. (See, and compare the *Greek* in *Mat*. x. 17, and xxiii. 34, *Mark* xiii. 9, and *Acts* xvi. 37.)

† In this Manner *Jewiſh* Tradition (according to the *Babyloniſh* and *Jeruſalem* Talmud) ſays, the Prophet *Iſaiah* was put to Death by the Order of King *Manaſſeh*, who was a wicked and inhuman, as well as an idolatrous Prince, as appears from 2 *Kings* xxi. 5, 6, 16. And *Jerom* on *Iſ*. lvii. 2, ſpeaks of it as *a moſt certain Tradition, that* Iſaiah *was ſawn aſunder with a wooden Saw*. *Juſtin Martyr* alſo, in his Dialogue with *Trypho* (Pag. 349, *Paris* Edit. 1636) taxes the *Jews* with having expunged a Paſſage out of the Old Teſtament, *relating to the Death of* Iſaiah, *whom they cut in ſunder with a wooden Saw*. And therefore this is the Inſtance of that Kind of Death, which the Apoſtle is moſt generally thought to refer to.

hoiakim.

hoiakim. (Jer. xxvi. 20—23.) And there were some noble Confessors, who, though not put to Death, were subjected to the greatest Hardships in Life: They were not permitted to have any settled Abode; but were forced to sculk about, like Vagabonds, from Place to Place; some cloathed with Sheep-skins, and others with Goat-skins, or rough Garments with the Wool or Hair upon them, to keep them warm, and defend them against the Inclemency of the Wind, Cold and Rain; such as the Garments that *Elijah* and *John the Baptist* wore; (2 *Kings* i. 8, and *Mat.* iii. 4) and they were contented with such mean Covering, as being deprived of all other common Conveniences and Comforts of this Life, as *Elijah* was; (1 *Kings* xvii. 6, 7, and xix. 4—7) and being pressed with many Difficulties, and very ill-treated by various Sorts of Abuses, (κακουχούμενοι) as *Moses*, *David*, and Multitudes of others were.

38 *(Of whom the World was not worthy) they wandered in Desarts, and* in *Mountains, and* in *Dens and Caves of the Earth.*

38. They were looked upon, and dealt with by their Enemies, as though they were the Pest of their Day, not fit for human Society, or to be suffered to live upon Earth; but, in reality, they were in themselves, and in God's Account, such excellent Persons, that the wicked Men of this World did not deserve to have so great a Blessing among them, as their holy Conversation and Admonitions, Warnings and Prayers might have been to them: In Judgment therefore to them, as well as for the Trial of their own Faith, they, under the Permission, Direction and Care of divine Providence, wandered about from one Place to another for Safety, in obscure and solitary Parts of the Wilderness, like *Elijah* who fled for his Life from the cruel Hands of *Jezebel*; (1 *Kings* xix, 3, 4) and in uninhabited Mountains, like *David*, who fled for his Life from the Persecutions of *Saul*, while he hunted him, *as one does a Partridge in the Mountains*: (1 Sam. xxiii. 14—26, and xxvi. 20.) And sometimes they were forced to betake themselves to Holes and Caverns of the Earth, the usual Receptacles of Wild-Beasts, to hide themselves from the wilder Rage of blood-thirsty Men, as *David* did to the Cave of *Adullam*, (1 *Sam.* xxii. 1) and as an hundred Prophets of the Lord were hid in Caves by *Obadiah*, and as *Elijah* concealed himself in a Cave to escape the Fury of the wicked *Jezebel*: (1 *Kings* xviii. 4, and xix. 9.) But their Faith supported them under, carried them through, and made them victorious over all these Severities and Hardships.

39 *And these all having obtained a good Report through Faith, received not the Promise:*

39. And all these antient Saints and Servants of God, as was said in our Entrance on this Discourse concerning them, (*ver.* 2) have received an honourable Testimony from him (μαρτυρηθέντες) in their respective Generations, and in the infallible Records of the sacred Oracles, that are handed down to us, relating to the signal Obedience, Sufferings and Atchievements, which they were animated to by means of the Stedfastness and lively Exercise of their Faith, which not

only realized, and trusted in the Promises and Providence of God, with respect to their particular Circumstances; but many of them, at least, relied upon the great Promise of the Messiah, which they embraced by Faith, and had the Benefit of, for the Salvation of their own Souls; and yet never received the actual Accomplishment of this Promise itself, * so as to live to see the Exhibition of Christ in the Flesh to fulfil the Work of Redemption, and introduce all the Glories of the Gospel-State, that depended upon it, and were consequent to it.

40 *God having provided some better* Thing *for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.*

40. The Reason why God in his infinite Wisdom, and sovereign Pleasure, did not fulfil the Promise of the *Messiah* in their Days was, because he had a Fore-view to, (προβλεψαμένου) and has accordingly provided for us, who believe in Christ as now actually come in the Flesh, this better Thing, † than they were favour'd with in their State of Nonage under that preparatory Dispensation, to the End that, (ἵνα) as *the Law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better Hope did, by the which we draw nigh to God*; (Chap. vii. 19) so their State of Religion, Worship and Privileges (*Luke* x. 24) might not be perfected, without the Exhibition of Christ in the Flesh, which they desired, and we now have been favoured with; nor without his Blood, Righteousness and

* The *Promise* here intended, I take to be the eminent and all-comprehensive Promise of Christ, which was made immediately after the Fall to our first Parents, and afterward to *Abraham* relating to his Seed, in whom all Nations should be blessed. This Promise, because it was frequently repeated to him, is called the *Promises* that he received, *ver.* 17; and this was the grand Promise, in which all the Promises of Grace center, and on which the Faith and Hope of the Old Testament-Believers rested, and which the Apostle seems to have had much in his Eye in several of the forementioned Instances.

† I can by no means think, as some would persuade us, that *the better Thing provided for us* relates to our Souls being received into Heaven, upon their leaving the Body, which they suppose the Believers, who lived before the coming of Christ, were not admitted to; but that their Death was a State of Insensibility. They accordingly interpret those Passages, that speak of there being *no Remembrance of God, nor praising him in the Grave*, and the like, as meant of the *whole Person*, which may very naturally relate only to *the Body*, much in like Manner *as* the *Resurrection from the Dead*, at the great Day, signifies only the Resurrection *of the Body*, and not of the Soul. And surely the *Psalmist* expected an Admission to Heaven immediately after his Death, when he said (*Ps.* lxxiii. 24—26) *Thou shalt guide me with thy Counsel, and afterward receive me to Glory. Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And there is none upon Earth, that I desire besides thee. My Flesh and my Heart fails; but God is the Strength of my Heart, and my Portion for ever.* And *Solomon*, speaking of *Death*, said, *Then shall the Dust return to the Earth as it was; and the Spirit shall return to God who gave it.* (Eccl. xii. 7.) Accordingly *Moses*, who was not translated as *Enoch* and *Elias* were, but *died*, (Deut. xxxiv. 5) appeared with *Elias* in the Mount of Transfiguration, *Mat.* xvii. 3; which was before the Death and Resurrection of our Lord, when, as these Gentlemen fancy, he awakened the Souls of all the good Men that had died before him. Christ also in the Days of his Ministry spake of the Angels having carried *Lazarus* into *Abraham*'s Bosom, when he died. (*Luke* xvi. 22.) And he argued from God's calling himself *the God of* Abraham, *the God of* Isaac, and *the God of* Jacob, that they were then living in their Souls, as well as should have a Resurrection in their Bodies to eternal Life; since *God is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living; for they all live to him*, which supposes a continual living Existence of their Souls in a State of Happiness. (See *Luke* xx. 37, 38, and the Note on *Mat.* xxii. 32.) And our Apostle says in the Chapter before us, *ver.* 16, *They desired a better Country, that is an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a City.* (See the Note there.) This therefore cannot be the *better Thing that he has prepared* for us; but it must relate to something more peculiar to the Gospel-State.

Grace,

Grace, which appear in all their Light and Glory under the Gospel-Dispensation, that ensued upon his coming for *our* Redemption and eternal Salvation, as well as *theirs*, that *through the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we might be saved even as they.* (Acts xv. 11.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a noble Grace, and how extensively useful is Faith! It as certainly believes the Reality even of invisible Things, merely upon a divine Testimony, as if it had ocular Demonstration of them; and as effectually gives the Objects of Hope an Existence in the Mind, as if they were actually present. And what an honourable Testimony has God given in his Word to the Faith of the Old Testament-Saints for the Encouragement of ours, who live under a Dispensation of much clearer Light and Grace! The Record of his accepting *Abel* and his Offering, as presented by Faith with an Eye to the atoning Sacrifice of Christ, points us to the only Way of a Sinner's Acceptance, as righteous through Faith in him, and so he, being dead, still bears Witness to this important Point. What high Favour does God shew to faithful Believers, while he executes righteous Judgments on the ungodly World! Unless we realize him by Faith as the only living and true God, and as in Christ the gracious Rewarder of those that earnestly seek him, 'tis impossible for us to please him. And how justly are they condemned and destroyed, like the old World, who, notwithstanding all God's Warnings and Long-suffering, persist in their Iniquities! But as to those who, like *Enoch* and *Noah*, walk with God, as Heirs of the Righteousness of Faith; and, like *Abraham*, readily obey his Commands, when he calls them to leave all earthly Kindred and Enjoyments, and resign themselves up to his Disposal, He, in Performance of his Promises, sometimes works Wonders of Providence for them, and will surely give them an eternal Inheritance in the glorious heavenly City of immoveable Foundations, which they are seeking and looking for, and God himself is the Builder of, and has prepared for them. They may indeed expect to meet with great Trials in the Way, though not equal to that of *Abraham*, when he was ordered to offer up his only begotten Son. But what sweet Supports does Faith give under them! And how loose should they sit from this World, as Pilgrims and Strangers upon Earth, that are desiring and travelling toward Heaven as their proper Home, and incomparably better Country than any on Earth! While Faith looks at the blessed Recompense of Reward, it fortifies us against the Fear of Man, and all the Terrors of Death; and makes us choose Christ, and even a suffering Lot with his People, rather than all the Riches, Honours and Pleasures of this transitory World, in Hope of a Resurrection to eternal Life.——With what sovereign Grace, does God give Faith to some of the most infamous Characters, like *Rahab* the Harlot, and save them, while others, like the rest of the People at *Jericho*, are left to perish for their Disobedience and Unbelief! How numberless, and in a Manner, endless are the Instances of the Power of Faith for exemplarily suffering, as well as doing great Things, with Strength and Courage in the Name of the Lord! And how different is God's Account from that of ungodly Sinners, concerning eminent Saints! Though the Wicked and Prophane think them not worthy to live, God often thinks them too great Blessings to continue long among them. And how much greater Helps have we to our Faith under the New Testament-Dispensation, than Old Testament-Believers had for theirs! Christ and all the Blessings of the Gospel are now exhibited in their full Light and Glory, that we might enjoy the most perfect State of Gospel-Worship, Privileges and Advantages on Earth, till the whole Scheme of divine Wisdom and Love shall be finished in Heaven. Then we, together with Old Testament-Believers, shall be perfected for ever. O may the Strength and Activity of our Faith exceed theirs, in Proportion to our richer Means and Advantages! And may we die, as well as live, in vigorous Exercises of it!

CHAP. XII.

The Apostle from the preceding Account of the Faith of Old Testament-Believers, under all their Difficulties, exhorts the Hebrews *to Constancy and Perseverance in Faith and Patience, under all their Trials and Afflictions; and, still further to encourage them thereunto, sets before them the more eminent Example of Christ, and the gracious Design of God in all the Sufferings they endure,* 1—13. *Recommends to them Peace and Holiness, and cautions them against acting a profane Part, like* Esau, *in despising spiritual Blessings,* 14—17. *And enforces his Argument by a Consideration of the much greater Excellency of the New, than the Old Testament-Dispensation,* 18—29.

TEXT.	PARAPHRASE.
1 *WHerefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a Cloud of Witnesses, let us lay aside every Weight, and the Sin which doth so easily beset* us, *and let us run with Patience the Race that is set before us,*	1. SINCE therefore, from the foregoing Instances of the Excellency and Power of Faith to support under, and triumph over all Difficulties and Dangers, it appears that we are surrounded with authentic Records of vast Multitudes of Believers,* who unite in their Testimony to the Duty, and rich Advantage of relying intirely upon the infinite Wisdom, Power, Faithfulness and Goodness of God, according to his Word, how great soever their Trials and Afflictions were, Let us in Imitation of, and animated by, their memorable and encouraging Example, as though they were looking on, as Eye-witnesses of our Behaviour, † be like Racers, who strip themselves for running; Let us, in the Exercise of Faith and Self-denial, *cast off the Works of Darkness*, (Rom. xiii. 12) and all inordinate Affections to, and Cares about the Things of this World, and lay aside all Observances of the ceremonial Law, that entangling Yoke of Bondage, and every thing else that would be a Clog upon our holy Profession, and a heavy Damp upon our Spirits, and Hindrance to our Progress in our Christian-

* A *Cloud*, as *Grotius*, Dr. *Owen* and others have observed, was a Metaphor often used by antient Writers to signify a *great Multitude*; and we have Instances of its being so used in the sacred Scriptures, as in *Is.* xliv. 22, and lx. 8, and *Ezek.* xxxviii. 9, 16. It may be taken as a strong figurative Expression of *great Companies*, in Allusion to the innumerable Drops of Water, that are collected together into a thick and refreshing Cloud; and, perhaps, the Allusion may be to *the Cloud of Glory* that encompassed *Israel*, and was a shining Light to them in the Wilderness.

† Here, and in the Remainder of this Verse, is an evident Allusion to the Custom of those Days, in which, among other Exercises, *Races* were wont to be run; and they that were engaged therein took care to have as little Weight to carry, as possible, and to put off all such Cloaths, as by their Weight, Length or otherwise, might incommode or hinder them in their Course. (See the Note 1 *Cor.* 9. 24.) 'Tis notorious that these Sorts of public Exercises were very frequent in the *Grecian* and *Roman* Games, which the *Hebrews* could scarce be ignorant of; and, in Imitation of these, *Herod Agrippa* had, before the Writing of this Epistle, built a Theatre and Amphitheatre at *Jerusalem*, and instituted public Games to be celebrated with great Magnificence, in Honour of *Claudius Cæsar*, who advanced him to the Kingdom of *Judea*. (Vid. *Joseph.* Antiq. Lib. xv. Cap. 8. §. 1, et de *Bel. Jud.* Lib. i. Cap. 2. §. 8. Edit. *Huds.*)

Course and Tendencies Heaven-ward; and let us endeavour with full Purpose of Heart, by divine Grace, to disentangle ourselves from the Power of original Corruption, and of every Sin, which, either through natural Constitution under our native Depravity, or thro' our peculiar Circumstances, Company and Situations in Life, we are most liable and exposed to, and in Danger of being overcome by, and which is ever at hand (ευπεριστατον) to embarrass and hinder us in our spiritual Concerns; and especially the great Sin of Unbelief, which is the Root of all Apostacy, (*Chap.* iii. 12) and stands in direct Opposition to that eminent Faith, which, as has been shown, (*Chap.* xi.) our famous Ancestors exercised upon all Occasions, and particularly when they were called to *do and suffer* the Will of God in the most trying Instances: And, being thus disencumber'd from every Load, and Hindrance, from Temptation without, and Corruption within, Let us lay ourselves out, in the Exertion of our Christian-Principles, unto an Exercise of persevering Fortitude, Quietness, and patient Resignation to the holy and sovereign Will of God, under our manifold Sufferings; and hold on our Way in running with Speed, Steadiness and Vigour, till we finish our Course of Faith, and of the Affliction, and unreserved Obedience, which is appointed to us of God, and marked out in his Word, and in the Example of the foremention'd Worthies, together with the glorious Issue of it, that we may *press toward the Mark for the Prize of the high Calling of God in Christ Jesus.* (Phil. iii. 14.)

2 *Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of* our *Faith*; *who for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the Shame, and is set down at the Right Hand of the Throne of God.*

2. In running this Christian-Course, as ever we would finish it well, Let us, like Racers that look forward, be continually (αφορωντες) looking off from Sin, and Self, and the Allurements and Terrors of this World, and from every thing, that would pull us back and dishearten us; and be looking forward by Faith to Jesus, the suffering Saviour, that we may derive Grace and Strength from him, to enable us to follow his most perfect Pattern, who is not only a matchless Example, but the efficient Cause, (αρχηγον) Leader, Conductor and Captain of our Faith, to begin it in us, and to encourage, increase, carry on and perfect it, and at length to crown it with all its blessed Fruits and Effects, in virtue of his meritorious Sufferings and Death; who had an assured Prospect of the great and glorious Things, that should be brought about thereby, and were the Rejoicing of his Soul; (*John* xiii. 31, 32) such as the Satisfaction of divine Justice, and the Advancement of the Glory of all God's Perfections, and of his Law and Government, with united Harmony, in the Reconciliation and eternal Salvation of the many Sons that he should bring to Glory; as also of his own personal Exaltation, when he himself should be crowned with Glory and Honour; (*Heb.* ii. 9, 10) all which were proposed to him, for his Encouragement and Reward, in the eternal Covenant

venant between his Father and him, and in the Premises and Prophecies answerable to it: (*Is.* liii. 10—12.) In the Foreview, Faith and Hope of all this Joy, he calmly submitted to, and with astonishing Meekness and Patience endured the Agonies, and lingering Pains of his Crucifixion; (See 1 *Pet.* ii. 23, and *Luke* xxiii. 34) and, with a truly heroic Greatness of Soul, he overlook'd all the Ignominy and Reproach of that scandalous Sort of Death, and all the Taunts and Jeers which attended it; and thought of them with sovereign Contempt, as not worth regarding, though he was therein exposed to open Shame, as if he had been the most despicable, as well as infamous of Criminals. And now, in Consequence, and as the just Reward of all this, he in that very Nature, in which he suffered, is exalted, as a triumphant Conqueror over Sin, Satan and the World, Death and Hell, to a State of perfect Rest from all his former Sufferings and Disgrace, and to the highest Honour, Dignity and Authority; which, to speak in a figurative Way, may be called his sitting down at the Right Hand of the Throne, where God the Father illustriously shines in all his Glory. (See the Note on *Acts* vii. 55.)

3 For consider him that endured such Contradiction of Sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your Minds.

3. To help you therefore against Discouragements under all your Tribulations, and Apprehensions of Danger, ye ought carefully to consider, reflect upon, and compare all Circumstances, (ἀναλογίσασθε) relating to the Person of Christ, and his extreme Sufferings, together with the invincible Patience and undisturbed Composure of Mind, with which he bore up under, passed through, and triumphed over, all the opprobrious Opposition, and cutting blasphemous Insults, that the most malicious and wicked Men belched out to his very Face, against his holy and divine Person and Office-Authority, Doctrine and Miracles, all the Days of his public Ministry, and especially towards, and at his Death: Ye ought also to compare these with their glorious Fruits to himself and to you, and with the infinite Disproportion there is between you and him, and between the worst that ever did, or can come upon you, and the inexpressibly more severe and complicated Trials, that met upon him. Let all these Things be weighed and set in Opposition one to the other, (ἵνα μὴ) to the end that ye may not sink and fail, be tired out, and lose all Patience and Firmness of Mind in your holy Profession, so as to think it an irksome Task; much less to throw it up, by reason of the Troubles and Afflictions, that may befal you for his Sake, who so willingly sustained all this for yours.

4 Ye have not yet resisted unto Blood, striving against Sin.

4. Though the violent Seizure of your Goods, and the Loss of Liberty and Property, which ye have cheerfully resigned for the Sake of Christ, in Hope of a better Inheritance in Heaven, (*Chap.* x. 34) are indeed very trying to Flesh and Sense; yet it ought to be considered that this, and all your other Persecutions hitherto have been so far restained by the

the Indulgence of Providence, as not to cost you your Lives, or the shedding of your Blood, as they did many of the Old Testament-Saints before-mentioned, and your great Lord and Master himself, in their Conflicts with the Adversaries that opposed them, and tempted them, as yours do you, to sin against God. It would therefore be a dangerous, as well as shameful Cowardise for any of you to flinch, and desist from your Christian-Course, on account of the lesser Difficulties and Losses, which ye meet with, (ἀγωνιζόμενοι) in contending against Sin and sinful Men, as Antagonists who set themselves, like Combatants, in Opposition to you, and strive to defeat and foil you; as, in Contests for Victory, one endeavours to do against another.

5 And ye have forgotten the Exhortation, which speaketh unto you as unto Children, My Son, despise not thou the Chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.

5. And can ye be unmindful of, * as they certainly are who faint under their Trials? Or are ye, like them, so insensible and inadvertent, as not to remember, and be affected with that gracious and encouraging Exhortation, which is directed to, and (διαλέγεται) reasons with all and every one of you, who are true Believers, as with Persons under the endearing Relation and Character of the Children of God, in which he, as your heavenly Father, speaks with all Tenderness by *Solomon*, which is applicable for your Direction, Caution and Comfort under every Tribulation? (*Prov.* iii. 11.) My Heaven-born and adopted Son, who art the Object of my peculiar Care and affectionate Love, Have a Care, on one Hand, of slighting or taking no Notice of, or being not suitably affected with the Corrections, which the Lord your God and Father sees fit, in the Disposals of his wise and holy Providence, to lay upon you for your (παιδείας) Instruction: Far be it from you to treat them with Neglect and Contempt, as if no Good could be answered by them; or to behave like a stubborn, hardened and incorrigible Child under his Father's Chastening for his Faults, to reclaim and reform him, as though you resolved to take your own Course, and would neither bow under, nor hearken to the Rod, and who has appointed it. (*Micah* vi. 9.) And, on the other Hand, as you should seriously consider, that, whoever be the Instruments of your Troubles, God has a holy, sovereign and over-ruling Hand in them, and has wise and gracious Designs in appointing and permitting them; so you ought to take Heed, lest, through Impatience, Fretfulness, or Misconstructions of his Dispensations, and the Workings of Unbelief, you shrink and be disheartened, to the Neglect of Duty; or Despair of Relief, and refuse to be comforted under his Reproofs.

* *Ye have forgotten the Exhortation*, according to a different Pointing of the Sentence, which is arbitrary, may be rendered interrogatively, *have ye forgotten?* And both Senses are taken into the Paraphrase.

6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth.

6. For what the Lord does herein, is so far from being a Token of his Hatred of you, (as fainting Souls are apt to conclude against themselves) that, on the contrary, your being exercised with it, and patiently bearing it, may be justly construed and improved into an Argument of his great Kindness for you, that Iniquity may not be your Ruin, according to what immediately follows in *Solomon*'s Admonition, (*Prov.* iii. 12.) where he says of those, for whom the Lord has a special Favour, as for his own dear Children, He for wise and holy Reasons exercises them, more or less, with various Afflictions, not in a Way of Law-Wrath, for the Satisfaction of his Justice, which is born by Christ for them; (*ver.* 2.) but in a Way of fatherly Chastisement for their Iniquities, in order to their being purged from them; (*Isa.* xxvii. 9.) and he lays the Rod of Correction (μαστιγοῖ) with the heavier Hand, when there may be Occasion for it, upon every one, whom he receives into the Relation of a Son, and whom he accepts, and takes Care of, as such, that he may prepare him for, and, at length, receive him to himself in a better World.

7 If ye endure Chastening, God dealeth with you as with Sons: For what Son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?

7. So that, if ye be not only visited with, but are also enabled, with Faith, Patience and Perseverance, humbly to submit to, and bear up courageously under, such Afflictions of any Sort, as God in his Providence permits, or orders, or measures out unto you, He therein (προσφέρεται) presents himself to you, not in a hostile Manner, like an Enemy, but with a benevolent Disposition and Design, like a kind Parent, who has your truest Welfare at Heart; and only takes the same Course with you, as a prudent Father uses, and indeed ought to go into, in dealing with his own Children: For where is the Son, whom an earthly Father, that is good, wise and faithful, does not correct, with due Moderation, for his Faults, to reclaim him from them, when he observes that they loudly call for it? And where is the Child of God, in whom there is nothing offensive that needs mending, and whom his heavenly Father does not seasonably chastise, that he may not, like foolishly fond Parents, spare the Rod and spoil the Child, when, in his infinite Wisdom and Love, he sees that there is Need of it for answering some valuable Purposes of his own Glory, and its spiritual Improvement, while it is in this imperfect State, and training up for Heaven?

8 But if ye be without Chastisement, whereof all are Partakers, then are ye Bastards, and not Sons.

8. But if, notwithstanding all that is amiss in you, and your remaining Propensity to Evil, ye were to be indulged with uninterupted Ease and Prosperity in the World, without any Rubs in your Way, or any Mixture of Troubles, as the corrective and instructive Chastenings of the Lord, with which all his Children, even the most eminent of them, have been, are, and will be visited one Way or other, though in different Degrees; and if ye have not been brought to submit to this wholesome and needful Disci-

pline of his Family, Ye might then justly be looked upon, and indeed would be dealt with in a Way of divine Neglect, as a spurious Brood, and not the true genuine Sons of God, and Heirs of the eternal Inheritance, *who are chastened of the Lord, that they might not be condemned with the World:* (1 *Cor.* xi. 32.) For he says of the false-hearted Professor, as he did of backsliding *Ephraim*, he *is joined to Idols*; *let him alone.* (Hosea iv. 17.)

9 Furthermore, we have had Fathers of our Flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them Reverence; shall we not much rather be in Subjection unto the Father of Spirits, and live?

9. It may also be of Use for you further to consider, in what a better Manner, with what superior Authority, and to what better Purpose, the Chastenings of your heavenly Father are managed, than those inflicted by earthly Parents, that ye may be more submissive to him, than, as in Duty bound, ye ever were to them therein. 'Tis a common Case with us all, that, in the Days of our Minority, our Fathers, from whom we derived our frail, corrupt and mortal Bodies, as they were the Instruments of begetting them, and by whose Care and Expence, under divine Providence, we received all Things for their Support and Comfort, took Occasions to correct us for our Misdemeanors; and we had, or ought to have had, such a Sense of their Authority over us, as to show a reverential and dutiful Regard to them, by bowing and yielding to their paternal Discipline for our Instruction, and Correction; and by submitting to the Rod, confessing our Crimes, and taking Heed not to offend them any more, nor to love them, or think they loved us, the less, because they corrected us: This certainly became us; * and is there not much higher Reason for us to own the supreme and sovereign Authority of our heavenly Father, who is *the God of the Spirits of all Flesh*, (Numb. xvi. 22, and xxvii. 16.) as he is the immediate Creator, Preserver and Governor of our rational and immortal Souls, and renews them by regenerating Grace? Shall we not meekly and patiently submit to his fatherly Chastening for our Iniquities, and be ashamed of them, grieved for them, and concerned at Heart, that we may offend him no more; but may maintain an humble Reverence of him, and an affectionate obediential Subjection to him, with grateful Acknowledgments of his Love and Favour, even in his Chastenings; and so may live in holy Communion with him, and De-

* The *Antithesis* between the *Fathers of our Flesh*, and *the Father of our Spirits*, shows, that our *earthly Fathers* are only the Instruments of the Generation of our *Bodies*, and that our *Souls* are not *ex traduce*, or by Derivation from them; but that they are created by the immediate Power of God, and infused into the Body, from Age to Age, as *the Soul* of our Father *Adam* was in his Production, when God *formed his Body of the Dust of the Ground, and breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life; and Man became a living Soul.* (Gen. ii. 7.) And, as to the Souls of his Descendents, the *Breath of the Almighty has given them Life*; (Job. xxxiii. 4.) they are *the Souls that he has made*; (Isa. lvii. 16.) he is also spoken of in the *present* Tense, as the God, who *formeth the Spirit of Man within him*; (Zech. xii. 1.) and *Solomon*, speaking of Death, says, *Then shall the Dust return to the Earth as it was; and the Spirit shall return to God, who gave it.* (Eccl. xii. 7.)

votednefs to him here, and for ever with him in Glory hereafter? This is infinitely more to our Advantage, than any Submiffion to the Corrections of our flefhly Fathers could be.

10 *For they verily for a few Days chaftened* us, *after their own Pleafure; but he for our Profit, that we might be Partakers of his Holinefs.*

10. For truly fome of them chaftened us, during the little while of our Minority, in an arbitrary Way, through Humour, Paffion, Pride or Weaknefs, without duly aiming at our Good by it; and even the wifeft of them, who meant well, and acted according to the beft of their fallible Judgment, might miftake the proper Seafons, or Meafures of their Reproofs and Punifhments; and the Benefit we reap'd by them was only, at moft, for the fhort Seafon of this tranfitory Life: But our heavenly Father, who is a God of unerring Wifdom and Judgment, and of the tendereft Compaffion, never exercifes his Authority in correcting us, while we are in this imperfect State, which is a Sort of Nonage, but in due Proportion, and when he knows it to be beft for us; he ever defigns, and one Way or other promotes, our fpiritual and eternal Benefit by it, that all the Fruit may be to take away Sin, and make us more and more conformable to his own holy Nature and Will in this World, till we be wrought up to a finlefs Perfection in the World to come. Shall we not therefore *humble ourfelves under the mighty Hand of God, that he may exalt us in due Time?* (1 Peter v. 6.)

11 *Now no Chaftening for the prefent feemeth to be joyous, but grievous: Neverthelefs, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable Fruit of Righteoufnefs, unto them which are exercifed thereby.*

11. Now, though it muft be acknowledged, and may, perhaps, be objected againft the Benefit of divine Corrections, that no Affliction, though but in the caftigatory Way, is defirable for its own Sake, or can be confidered as pleafant in itfelf, or agreeable to Flefh and Blood and carnal Reafon, while we are under it; but is in its own Nature, as a Chaftening, very irkfome, and fometimes very diftreffing and hard to be borne, efpecially when we confider it, as a Token of God's Difpleafure for Sin: Yet, in the Judgment of Faith, and in after-Reflections upon it, and by an attending and confequent fanctified Ufe of it, it produces peaceful and comfortable Fruits of a fpiritual and holy Nature, which are Evidences of our State of Peace with God, through Faith in the Righteoufnefs of Chrift, (*Rom.* v. 1.) bring Peace into our own Souls, and promote a peaceable Temper towards others; (*If.* xxxii. 17, and *James* iii. 18.) and which make us wifer and better, more humble under a Senfe of Sin, more watchful and prayerful, more circumfpect in our Walk, more weaned from this World, and more fpiritual, holy and heavenly-minded, than ever we were before. When we are trained up by them, and learn in that inftructive School to bear them with Faith and Patience, with due Submiffion to, and Reverence of our heavenly Father, with ferious Enquiries, wherefore he contends with us, and with an Exercife of every other Grace, that is fuitable to the Nature and Defign of afflicted Circumftances, the Advantage, which refults from

from them, is vastly an over-balance to the Pain and Sorrow of undergoing them; and, whatever we thought while they press'd sorely upon us, we may, after we have been exercised with them, and come to reflect upon them, say with *David*, *'Tis good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy Statutes*; and *thou, O Lord, in Faithfulness* hast *afflicted me.* (Psal. cxix. 71, 75.) And hereafter, when we get to Heaven, we shall clearly see, and abundantly reap the rich Advantage of them all.

12 *Wherefore lift up the Hands which hang down, and the feeble Knees.*

12. Since therefore these are the gracious Ends and Benefits of God's chastening you, don't give Way to Dejection or Despondency under them, like Persons who, through Faintness in running a Race,* *(ver. 1.)* hang down their Hands, which are Tokens of Weariness, Drooping and Sadness; and the Joints of whose Knees shake and smite together through Weakness, Fear and Dismay; *(Nahum* ii. 10.) And take heed of being disheartned, or of disheartning one another under the Sufferings that befall you; but, on the contrary, encourage yourselves, and each other in the Lord your God, to hold on in his Ways, like Persons that lift up their Hands with Alacrity, Joy and Triumph; and when any are fearful and faint-hearted among you, look well to yourselves and your Fellow-Christians, that ye be strong in the Lord and in the Power of his Might, as knowing that your *God will come with Vengeance* to your Enemies, and *with Recompence* of Good to you, and *will save you. (Is.* xxxv. 3, 4.) A Belief of this, and a courageous Behaviour correspondent to it, will be like strengthening the weak Hands, and confirming the feeble Knees.

13 *And make strait Paths for your Feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the Way; but let it rather be healed.*

13. And, that Afflictions may be suitably improved, and not lost upon you, see that, like Levellers of the Road for Travellers and Racers, ye by a close Adherence to Christ, and by a Conversation becoming the Gospel, remove all Obstacles out of your own and your Brethren's Way to eternal Life, that both ye yourselves, and they may walk uprightly, and run steadily in the Paths of Truth and Holiness, and may make the Word of God your only Rule of Faith, Worship and Obedience, that it may be a *Light to your Feet, and a Lamp to your Path*, (Ps. cxix. 105.) and all your Ways may be directed to keep his Statutes; lest those of you, who are ready to halt, and to be misled in their Christian-Course, through Temptation, Darkness and Fear of Sufferings, and through the cunning Craftiness of such as lie in wait to deceive, be perverted and turn'd aside from

* Here seems to be an Allusion to *Racers*, who appear to be either faint, or vigorous in running, according as their Hands hang down and their Knees are feeble, or not: And the Exhortation in this and the next Verses may be considered as directed to the *Hebrews*, with a Reference either to their Care about *themselves*, or about *their Brethren*: the last of which seems to be most immediately intended in the Passage here quoted from *Is.* xxxv. 3, where it lies thus, *Strengthen ye the weak Hands, and confirm the feeble Knees.*

Christ and the Goſpel, and from the Paths of Righteouſneſs and Peace: But let it, on the contrary, be your great Concern, that your own Souls, and the Souls of your Fellow-Chriſtians may be relieved under all ſpiritual Infirmities, Diſcouragements and Fears; and may be reſtored to a right Mind, and to Strength and Vigour in the good Ways of the Lord, and kept ſtedfaſt in the Profeſſion, Faith, Hope and Holineſs of the Goſpel.

14 *Follow Peace with all* Men, *and Holineſs, without which no Man ſhall ſee the Lord:*

14. In order hereunto, Let it be your conſtant Care, and earneſt Endeavour, to purſue the Things which make for Peace, in civil and religious Society, as far as is conſiſtent with Truth and Holineſs. (*Rom.* xiv. 19.) Run eagerly after it, even when it ſeems to flee from you; and do your utmoſt by all lawful Means to obtain it, that, if poſſible, ye may live peaceably with all Men, (*Rom.* xii. 18.) whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, Chriſtians or Heathens, Friends or Enemies, and ſuch as perſecute you: And, together with Peace, be ſure to follow after Holineſs, in daily Applications to the Throne of Grace for it, and in the Uſe of all other Means of helping you forwards in it: Whether ye can ſucceed in your Attempts for Peace with Men or not, ſtudy to promote univerſal Purity of Heart and Life, in Conformity to the Image and Will of God, as in others, ſo particularly in yourſelves; which is abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation, and without a conſcientious Regard to which, together with Peace, no Man, whatever be his Profeſſion or Pretences, can be fit for, or in the very Nature of Things capable of, or according to the Conſtitution of the Goſpel ever be admitted to, the beatific Viſion and Enjoyment of the bleſſed and holy God of Peace; or to be with the holy Jeſus, the Prince of Peace, to behold his Glory, and to be made completely happy in his immediate bliſsful Preſence, where he is ſeen as he is.

15 *Looking diligently, leſt any Man fail of the Grace of God; leſt any Root of*

15. This is a Matter of ſo great Importance, that it behoves every one of you carefully to inſpect your own Principles, Temper and Conduct, * and to have a watchful Eye over one another; leſt any of you, or of your Brethren,

* The Word (ἐπισκοποῦντες;) here rendered *looking diligently* ſignifies, and in 1 *Peter* v. 2. is uſed for, diſcharging the Office of a *Biſhop*, or *Overſeer* of the Church, in watching over its Principles and Manners. Were we to take it in that Senſe, the Exhortation in this Place is to be conſidered, as directed to *Paſtors*, that had the Rule over them, and watch'd for their Souls. (*Chap*. xiii. 7, 17.) But as this Epiſtle is directed to the Body of profeſſing *Hebrews*, who are all along in this Context, and through the whole Epiſtle, ſpoken to; and as no Addreſs, as far as I have obſerved, is made *to the Officers* of the Church in any Part of it; I therefore rather apprehend, that this Paſſage relates to the *brotherly* and *charitable* Care, which the *Members of the Church* ought to have for one another, and to their mutually inſpecting or watching over the Spirit, Temper and Behaviour of their Fellow-Members, as well as over their own Hearts and Ways, leſt any of them ſhou'd, contrary to their holy Profeſſion, be *deſtitute*, or *come ſhort of the Grace* of God, as the Word (ὑστερεῖν) ſometimes ſignifies, *Chap*. iv. 1, and xi. 37, and *Rom*. iii. 23. And at others, *to lack, to be in Want*, or *not to have* and *come behind*, as in *Matt*. xix. 20, *Mark* x. 21, *Luke* xv. 14, and xxii. 35, *John* ii. 3, 1 *Cor*. i. 7, 2 *Cor*. xi. 5, 9, and xii. 11, and *Phil*. iv. 12. But 'tis never uſed for *falling from*; and ſo can give no Countenance to the Notion of *falling from Grace*.

be

Bitterness springing up, trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

be contented without, and through Slothfulness, Carnality and Unbelief, rest, or come short, or be destitute of an Interest in the special Favour of God, and of a real Work of Heart-changing Grace, and so be not what he appears to be; and should apostatize from the Profession of the Gospel. This ye ought to be deeply concerned about, for Fear lest any Apostate, or Principle of Apostacy; or any Corruption in Doctrine or Practice, that is offensive to God, and pernicious to yourselves, and will prove Bitterness in the End, like Gall and Wormwood, (*Deut.* xxix. 18.) should sprout forth, and discover itself, like a Branch springing up from its Root, and should infect and pervert any of you to his own Loss and Damage, and to the Grief and Trouble of others; and lest, by Means of its malignant Influence, many among you should be corrupted in their Minds and Manners, since *a little Leaven leavens the whole Lump*, (1 Cor. v. 6, and Gal. v. 9.) which would mar the Beauty, Purity, Peace and Order of the whole Church; and, unless such Persons were to be cast out of it, they would be like poisonous Herbs growing in a Garden, which are not only full of destructive Qualities themselves, but might taint others that are planted near them: And as one Sin naturally runs into another, and wicked Men wax worse and worse, ye have need to be very careful to put a Stop to the first Beginnings of Apostacy.

16 *Lest there* be *any Fornicator, or profane Person, as Esau, who for one Morsel of Meat sold his Birthright.*

16. Take heed lest there should be found any one, who makes a Profession of Christ's Name among you, that through the Power of Unbelief, and of unsubdued Lusts, and the Allurements of Vice, addicts himself to Whoredom, whether Adultery, or simple Fornication, which is directly contrary to that Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord, (*ver.* 14.) and which persisted in, and not repented of, would certainly exclude him from an Inheritance in the Kingdom of God; (1 *Cor.* vi. 9.) * or lest any of you should at

* A *Fornicator* may signify any Person that is guilty of unlawful Embraces, whether in a single or married State. Accordingly this Word is often translated *Whoremongers*, inclusive of Adulterers, *Ephes.* v. 5, 1 *Tim.* i. 10, *Rev.* xxi. 8, and xxii. 15; and *Fornication* is sometimes used in a like wide Extent. (See the Note on 1 *Cor.* v. 1.) This is a Sin against our *Neighbour*, as well as against *ourselves*, and so is a Transgression of the *second Table* of the Law: And *Profaneness* is a Sin committed immediately against *God* and *Religion*; and so is a Breach of the *first Table* of the Law.—But it is Matter of Dispute among Interpreters, whether *Esau* were guilty of *Fornication*, or not; some of which consider the Reference here made to *him*, only as an Instance of a *profane* Person: And what is said of him, in the Close of the Verse, seems to favour this Thought, as *that* only relates to his *selling his Birthright*, which contained, or had annexed to it several valuable Privileges, some of a temporal, and others of a spiritual Nature. (See the Note on *Chap.* xi. 20.) The *temporal* Privileges were Dominion over the younger Brethren, and a double Portion of the paternal Inheritance, as appears from *Gen.* xlix. 3, *Deut.* xxi. 17, and 1 *Chron.* v. 1, 2. Accordingly when *Isaac* had given the Birthright to *Jacob*, he said to *Esau*, *I have made him thy Lord, and all his Brethren I have given to him for Servants; and with Corn and Wine have I sustained him.* (Gen. xxvii. 37.) And as to *spiritual* Privileges, though there are different Opinions about them, and we may not be able to pronounce with Certainty what they were; yet 'tis reasonable to suppose that there were some of this Nature; becanse the *First-born* carried a typical Representation of *Christ*, who is called *the First-born among many Brethren*; (Rom. viii. 29.) and the Inheritance of eternal

at length so far degenerate, as to become an impious Wretch, that makes a Jest of, ridicules and despises the sacred Doctrines, Duties, Ordinances and Blessings of divine Revelation, and renounces them all, through Fear of suffering for them, or through an inordinate Affection to this World, in like Manner as *Esau* made light of, despised and quitted all Claim to his Birth-right; insomuch that, for the Sake of satisfying his present Hunger, he sold and resigned to his Brother *Jacob* all the *sacred*, as well as *civil* Privileges, which were annexed to it; and *that* for so trifling a Price as a little Parcel of Food, which consisted of a Piece of Bread and a Mess of Pottage, (*Gen.* xxv. 29—34.) and was sufficient for only a Meal at one eating. (βρώσεως μιᾶς;) The Consequence of which was very tremendous and irretrievable.

17 *For ye know how that afterward when he would have inherited the Blessing, he was rejected: For he found no Place of Repentance, though he sought it carefully with Tears*

17. For ye, being conversant with the Holy Scriptures, according to your Duty and daily Practice, can't but be familiarly acquainted with the History of *Esau*, as there recorded; and must needs know, that when he afterwards, und r dreadful Surprize, came to see and reflect upon the Folly, Loss and Mischief of the Bargain he had made, as it affected his *temporal* Dignities, (though there were no Signs of Sorrow for his *Sin*, and of Repentance toward *God*, or of seeking *his* Favour, and begging that he would grant him Repentance unto Life) he would fain have regained the Birthright, and the Patriarchal Blessing annexed to it, which he had so inconsiderately, and indeed wickedly parted with: But as he was disapproved of God; so his Petition to his Father *Isaac* was utterly rejected: For *Esau* could find no Disposition in the Heart of his Father *Isaac* to revoke the Blessing, which he had prophetically, under divine Influence, though unwittingly to himself, pronounced upon *Jacob*; nor could he by any Means prevail upon his Father to change his Mind, and reverse his Sentence; instead of which he confirm'd it, saying, *I have blessed him, yea, and he shall be blessed.* (Gen. xxvii. 23.) It was now too late for *Esau* to procure any Alteration of it, though he solicitously begged it, not of God, but of *Isaac*, with the greatest Importunity and Concern, and with Floods of Tears, *crying* aloud, *with a great and exceeding bitter Cry, saying, Bless me, even me also, O my Father.* (Gen. xxvii. 34, 38.) This ought to be a solemn Caution to you, as it will be equally impossible for any Professors of Christ's Name, that despise the Grace of the Gospel, and turn Apostates, to be ever brought to sincere Repentance, and to an Inheritance of its

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eternal Life is spoken of as the Privilege of *the First-born* in our Context, *ver.* 23. And unless some Privileges of a *spiritual* Nature pertained to the *Birthright*, it seems not to be very obvious, why *Esau* should be called *a profane Person*, on Account of his selling it; nor how this Instance would have come up to the Apostle's Design in cautioning the *Hebrews* against a Contempt of the *Gospel*, and of its *spiritual* Privileges and Obligations: For a *profane Person* (βέβηλος) is one who treats *sacred Things* with *irreligious Contempt*, and is ranked among the most flagitious and ungodly Sinners. (1 *Tim.* i. 9.)

Privi-

Privileges and Blessings, which they with a wicked Mind have renounced, notwithstanding all the Proofs they have had of the Truth of Christianity, as has been declared; (*Chap.* vi. 4—6. See the Note there) and God will never reverse his Sentence of Condemnation on them, though, when they come to feel its terrible Effects at Death and Judgment, (if not before) they will bitterly lament their deplorable Condition, and cry out for Relief.

18 *For ye are not come unto the Mount that might be touched, and that burned with Fire, nor unto Blackness, and Darkness, and Tempest,*

18. Take heed that ye don't fall short of the Grace of the Gospel, and think lightly of its Blessings, which are incomparably better than ever were enjoyed under the Old Testament, as has been shown at large, in the main Argument of this Epistle; and have a Care that ye don't revolt from Christianity to *Judaism*: For, to begin with an Account of the *Jewish* Dispensation, Ye, in the Gospel-State of Worship, are not called and led, as your Fathers were, to enter into Covenant with God, and approach his sacred Presence, according to the awful and tremendous Appearances of his Majesty on Mount *Sinai* in *Arabia*, (Gal. iv. 25.) which, in Opposition to the spiritual Nature of the Gospel-Church, signified by Mount *Sion*, (*ver.* 22. See the Note there) was of an earthly, material Substance, capable in itself of being touched, or felt after a corporal Manner, though all such touching it, by Man or Beast, was forbidden, while the Tokens of the divine Presence were upon it at the Delivery of the Law, (*ver.* 20.) and while it was amazingly touched, moved and shaken by the Power of God; (*Ex.* xix. 20, *Ps.* lxviii. 8, and civ. 32.) which might be an Emblem of that Dispensation, as *carnal, earthly and moveable*: (ver. xxvii.) Nor are ye come to the Fire that burnt (κεκαυμένῳ πυρὶ) on the Mountain, as though it were all over in a Flame, out of the Midst of which God spake unto *Israel*; (Deut. iv. 11, 12, and v. 22, 23.) which may be considered as an Emblem of the *Terribleness* of that Dispensation, and of the Justice of God, who is a *consuming Fire to Sinners*, according to the strict Tenor of that fiery Law: (*ver.* 29, and *Deut.* xxxiii. 2.) Nor are ye come to the gloomy and horrible Darkness, that covered Mount *Sinai*, by Means of the thick Cloud of Smoke which arose from, and was mingled with, the Flashes of Fire that burned upon it; (*Deut.* v. 22—24.) which may be considered as an Emblem of *the Darkness* of that Dispensation, through which the carnal *Israelites* could not look unto, and true Believers themselves had but obscure Conceptions of, the Way of Pardon and Deliverance from deserved Wrath, and of that Salvation which was to be brought in by the promised Messiah: Nor are ye come to the dreadfully tempestuous Thundering, Lightening and Earthquake, that were in the Mount at the giving of the Law; (*Ex.* xix. 16, 18, and xx. 18.) which may be considered as an Emblem of the *Severity of its Curse*, and of the Terrors of an awaken'd Conscience,

science, under a Sense of Guilt, and Fear of the Punishment, that is due to the Transgressors of it:

19 *And the Sound of a Trumpet, and the Voice of Words; which* Voice *they that heard, intreated that the Word should not be spoken to them any more.*

19. Nor are ye summon'd to appear before the divine Majesty, amidst those terrible Representations of him, as your Lawgiver and Judge, by an exceeding loud and awful Alarm, which made the *Israelites* tremble, and which, *waxing louder and louder* for a considerable Time, still further awakened their Fears, and may be compared to the strong Sound of a Trumpet, (*Ex.* xix. 16—19.) like what will be heard at the Resurrection of the Dead to the Judgment of the great Day of Account: * (1 *Cor.* xv. 52.) And then followed the Promulgation of the Law in the Audience of the People, by a terrible articulate Voice, which distinctly pronounced, in their own Language, the Words contained in the Ten Commandments; (*Ex.* xx. 1—17, and *Deut.* iv. 12.) which solemn Declaration of this holy and righteous Law, in all its Strictness and Extent, made such a terrifying Impression on the Minds of them that heard it, and filled them with such a Sense of Guilt and Obnoxiousness to divine Wrath, that they earnestly begg'd of *Moses* to interpose, as a Mediator between God and them, and communicate his Mind and Will to them; and deprecated God's speaking those awful Words to them, and demanding their Obedience, in such an immediate and terrible Manner any more, lest they should die. (*Ex.* xx. 18, 19, *Deut.* v. 5, 23, 24, 25, and xviii. 16.)

20 (*For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a Beast touch the Mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a Dart.*

20. For they were conscious to themselves that, through the Weakness and Depravity of Nature, they were utterly incapable of coming up to the Sanctity and Strictness of these Commandments and Prohibitions, and of being justified by their own imperfect Obedience to them; and they knew not how to bear up under the dreadful Appearances of God in the Manner of his publishing them: And so severe were his Injunctions, as expresly to command that, if any one, during this Solemnity of the Divine Presence, should break through the Bounds, which he had set round about the Mount, and should touch so much as the Border of it, whether it were a Man, or even a Beast of any Kind, he should not live, but should surely be stoned to Death, or

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* *This Sound of a Trumpet, and the Voice of Words* appear to have been formed by the Ministry of *Angels*: For they are spoken of, as to be sent with the great Sound of a Trumpet at the End of the World, *Mat.* xxiv. 31; and *the Law* is said to be given *by the Disposition of Angels*, and *ordained by Angels in the Hand of a Mediator*, meaning *Moses*, and to be the *Word spoken by Angels* (Acts vii. 53, Gal. iii. 19, and Heb. ii. 2.) And yet as *the Trumpet*, which shall be sounded at the last Day, is called *the Trump of God*, 1 Thess. iv. 16; so *the Voice*, by which the Law was delivered, is represented as *God's answering* Moses *by a Voice*, (Ex. xix, 19) and it follows (*Chap.* xx. 1.) that *God spake all these Words*; and referring hereunto, *Moses* said to *Israel*, *The Lord spake unto you out of the Midst of the Fire; Ye heard the Voice of Words*; and *these Words the Lord spake unto all your Assembly in the Mount—with a great Voice.* (Deut. iv. 12, and v. 22.) By comparing these Things together, we may suppose that the Lord made an immediate Use of the Ministry of Angels, in a supernatural Utterance of both the Sound, and the Words.

pierced and slain with an Arrow, Javelin, or Dart; (*Ex.* xix. 12, 13.) which was an awful Indication of the great Distance, that Creatures are to be kept at from God, by Reason of Sin; and of his being inaccessible to Sinners, according to the Tenor of the Law; as also of the Vengeance that he will execute upon the Transgressors of his Commands.

21 *And so terrible was the Sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake)*

21. Yea, so astonishing, shocking and dreadful was the Appearance (το φανταζομενον) of the awful Tokens, by which the immediate Presence of the divine Majesty was evidently manifested to be on the Mount, that even *Moses* * himself, notwithstanding all his eminent Sanctity, and his Office of a Mediator to declare the Mind of God to the People, and his frequent Converses with him, was struck with such Terror and Consternation at it, as he dwelt in mortal Flesh, and had still the Remainders of a Body of Sin, that he could not forbear crying out, at the first Sight of it, I am all over seized with an affrightning Astonishment and Dismay, and with horrible Trembling. So cloudy and tremendous was the Mount *Sinai*-Dispensation of the Covenant, which concealed its most delightful Glories, and engendred a Bondage Frame of Spirit, (*Gal.* iv. 24, and see the Note on *Chap.* viii. 6) that it may well take you off from all Thought or Desire of returning to the *Mosaic* Law, the amazing Terrors of which ye are not now called unto.

22 *But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable Company of Angels,*

22. But, instead of being summoned to approach unto God under such dreadful Representations, as were made at Mount *Sinai*, which was of an earthly and corporeal Nature; ye, on the contrary, are called by the Gospel to a milder, sweeter and more encouraging Dispensation of Light and Grace, and of incomparably more excellent, and advantageous Privileges and Blessings; and are brought, through

* *Moses*'s *saying I exceedingly fear and quake*, is not to be found in the History of God's awful Promulgation of the Law at Mount *Sinai*, nor in any other Part of the Old Testament: But it was, probably, a well-known and received Tradition among the *Jews*, and, perhaps, recorded in some of their Writings then extant, like the Names of *Jannes* and *Jambres*, two famous Magicians of *Egypt*, which the Apostle speaks of 2 *Tim.* iii. 8; and therefore he might with good Propriety mention this to the *Hebrews*, who were well satisfied, in one or other of these Ways, about the Truth of the Fact; and it is highly probable that *Moses* expressed these Words to God, when, as we are told, *Ex.* xix. 18, 19. *Mount Sinai was altogether on a Smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in Fire; and the Smoke thereof ascended, as the Smoke of a Furnace, and the whole Mountain quaked greatly; and when the Voice of the Trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake,* and *God answered him by a Voice.* But as what *Moses* spake, or what God answered him by a Voice is not there recorded, 'tis most likely to have been then, that he said *I exceedingly fear and quake*; and that God comforted him against his Fears by the Voice which answered him: For 'tis added in the next Verses (20, 21, 22) that *the Lord called Moses up to the Top of the Mount, and Moses went up; and the Lord said unto Moses, Go down and charge the People, lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish*, &c. Whereupon, *Moses*'s Fear being allay'd, he afterward *said to the People, Fear not*, &c. Chap. xx. 20.—— However, we may depend upon the Certainty of what the Apostle says about *Moses*'s Fear, since he, who wrote under divine Inspiration, has asserted it, which he would not have done, had it been a Falshood. Traditions thus confirmed by Apostolic Authority may safely be received by us; though no Regard is to be paid to Popish Traditions, which have no such Warrant, and are generally stuffed with the most fabulous, anti-scriptural and incredible Stories.

the Faith of Christ, into a happy and holy Communion with the New Testament-Church, which is of a spiritual Nature †; and, in Opposition to Mount *Sinai*, may be called Mount *Sion*, as, like the Mount which bore that Name, it is chosen and beloved of God; the Place of his delightful Residence and special Manifestation of his Favour; the Seat of divine Worship and Ordinances in religious Assemblies; and the Object of all his gracious Promises; *the Perfection of Beauty, and the Joy of the whole Earth*, as was said of that holy Place. (*Ps.* xlviii. 2, and L. 2.) It may also be stiled *the City*, which is formed into a numerous, beautiful and orderly Society, and endued with glorious Privileges and Immunities, by the Charter, and under the Protection and Defence, Laws and Government of God himself, who erected it by his Gospel and Spirit upon Christ, as its Foundation, and is the Proprietor of it; and who, in Opposition to all the Idols of the Heathen, is the only living and true God, and dwells in this holy City to animate it with his gracious Presence, and take effectual Care of it, that all its true Members, who are free Denizons, may live to him here, and with him in all his Glory for ever hereafter. This City of God, consider'd in Opposition to the earthly *Jerusalem*, is of a *heavenly* Nature, as its Constitution and Original, and the Birth of all its spiritual Inhabitants are from Heaven; as it is compacted together in heavenly Peace and Harmony by the Bonds of Faith and Love; and as its Spirit and Temper, and all its Tendencies are towards Heaven, and shall issue, and be perfected in the heavenly World. And in this State of the Gospel-Church, ye are admitted to a most noble and exalted Communion in Love and Service, *with Ten Thousand Times Ten Thousand, and Thousands of Thousands, yea, numberless Myriads of blessed and holy Angels*, who surround the Throne of God's Glory, and *always behold his Face in Heaven, and do his Commandments, hearkening to the Voice of his Word*; (Rev. v. 11, Mat. xviii. 10, and Ps. ciii. 20.) and who are your Fellow-Servants, not to be worshipped

† What is contained in this and the next Verses, is not to be considered as a Description of the Privileges and Blessings of *the future State* of the Church in Heaven; but of its *present State* on Earth under the Gospel-Dispensation, which the Apostle opposes to that of the Old-Testament: For therein lies the Force of his Argument to shew the Preference of the Gospel-State, beyond that under the Law, and to guard the *Hebrews* against apostatizing from Christianity to *Judaism*. But, in Allusion to the Characters under which the Church of *Israel* was represented, he speaks of the Gospel-Church, as *Mount Sion, the City of the living God, and the heavenly Jerusalem*, which are all Terms of much the same Import, and are applied in Scripture to the New Testament-Church of true Believers, of which the Church of *Israel* were Types. Thus 'tis called *Sion, and the City of God*, If. ii. 3, and *Ps.* lxxxvii. 3, 5; and *Gentile*-Believers are called *Fellow-Citizens with the Saints*; (Ephes. ii. 19) and, in Distinction from the earthly *Jerusalem*, the Gospel-Church is called *Jerusalem, which is from above and free, and the Mother of us all.* (Gal. iv. 26.) And Believers being *come to it*, as described under these Titles, may most immediately relate to the Communion, which they are brought into with the whole *Church on Earth*; though the following Parts of the Description seem more immediately to relate to the Communion they have, even while they are here, with *the Church in Heaven*, and with God and the Mediator, who are most perfectly enjoy'd there.

by you, but to worship God with you; (*Rev.* xix. 10, and xxii. 9) and are all *ministring Spirits*, not with Terror, like those Appearances at Mount *Sinai*; but with Love and Kindness, to perform the most important Offices of Friendship; to be your invisible Guardians in Life, and magnificent Convoy to *Abraham's* Bosom at Death, as they are *sent forth to minister for them, who shall be Heirs of Salvation.* (Luke xvi. 22, and Heb. i. 14.)

23 To the general Assembly and Church of the First-born, which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the Spirits of just Men made perfect,

23. And ye are brought into a spiritual and holy Fellowship with the whole Body of sincere Believers, whether militant on Earth, or triumphant in Heaven, who constitute the Catholic Church of true and vital Members of Christ, and are a much more delightful and glorious Society under Christ their Head, than were the general Congregation of all the Males of *Israel*, at their solemn Feasts three Times a Year; (*Ex.* xxxiv. 23, and *Deut.* xvi. 16) or than *the general Assembly* of their whole Church at Mount *Sinai*, when the Law was delivered to them; and who, to allude to *the Birthright* which *Esau* sold, (*ver.* 16, see the Note there) have many Privileges above the rest of Mankind, as the Church of *Israel* had that were called God's *First-born*, (Ex. iv. 22) and were therein typical of Christ, and of the Gospel-Church as interested in him, and as the *First-fruits to God and to the Lamb*; (Rev. xiv. 4) who also are *Heirs of God, and Joint Heirs with Christ*, by Virtue of their Union with him; and are conformed to his Image, *who is the First-born among many Brethren*, (Rom. viii. 17, 29) *and has redeemed them to God by his Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation, and made them unto their God, Kings and Priests*; (Rev. v. 9, 10) *whose Names*, to allude to the Register of the First-born of the Males of *Israel*, (Numb. iii. 40) are, as it were, inrolled in the Records of Heaven, and in the Lamb's Book of Life, (*Luke* x. 20, and *Rev.* xiii. 8) as those, *whom God has chosen*, merely of his Grace, *before the Foundation of the World, that they should be holy, and without Blame before him in Love.* (Ephes. i. 4.) And in this Gospel-State, instead of being kept at a Distance from the divine Presence, as when the Law was delivered in all its Terrors at Mount *Sinai*; ye have Liberty of humble Boldness, and Access with Confidence, by the Faith of Christ, (*Eph.* iii. 12) to the righteous and holy God himself, even under the Character of the sovereign Lord and *Judge* of all Mankind; who, being your reconciled God and Father, will at his appointed Day for *judging the World in Righteousness, by Jesus Christ*, (Acts xvii. 31) vindicate the righteous Cause of his Saints and suffering Servants, and *give them a Crown of Righteousness, and of Glory that fadeth not away.* (2 *Tim.* iv. 8, and 1 *Pet.* v. 4.) And ye are admitted to the most desirable Communion, in Faith, Love and Joy, Worship and Obedience, with the separate *Spirits of Believers* in Heaven, who were righteous before God on Earth, as having been

justified by the Blood, and sanctified by the Spirit of Christ; and whose Souls *departed from*, and did not sleep with their Bodies; but, immediately upon the Dissolution of their mortal Frame, were *present with the Lord*; (2 Cor. v. 8, and Phil. i. 23) and there they live in a State of perfect Freedom from all Sin and Sorrow, Temptation, Trouble or Danger, and of perfect Holiness and Happiness in the Vision, Enjoyment and Likeness of their God and Saviour. Ye have a Partnership with these blessed Spirits, as ye are Children of the same heavenly Father, united to the same Head, gathered together into one Body in him. (*Eph.* i. 10) and animated by the same divine Spirit; and as ye are intitled to, and shall inherit the same heavenly Mansions with them, and join in their Hallelujahs for ever.

24 *And to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the Blood of Sprinkling, that speaketh better Things than* that of *Abel.*

24. And the Foundation, Medium and Center of all this glorious Communion, into which ye are brought by the Gospel, lies in your being called, not to *Moses*, as a typical Mediator of the Old-Testament; but to *Jesus*, the only true and effectual Saviour, that ye may come by Faith to him, as such, and may have an immediate free Access, under a Sense of all your Guilt, Vileness and Unworthiness, to him, who is the only acceptable and all-sufficient *Mediator* between God and Man, and has irrevocably established and confirmed the Covenant of Grace, as well as purchased all its Blessings, in this new and best Administration of it, according to what has been set forth at large: (*Chap.* viii. 6—13, and ix. 15—20.) And ye have Communion by Faith in all the Virtue of his precious *Blood*, which was *shed for many, for the Remission of Sins*, (Mat. xxvi. 28) and is applied to your Souls by the holy Spirit, that ye may plead it for Pardon, Justification and all Salvation, and your *Consciences may be purged by it from dead Works, to serve the living God*; (Heb. ix. 14) and which, in Allusion to *Moses*'s sprinkling the Blood of the Covenant on the People, and on the Book of the Law, (*Chap.* ix. 19, 20, and *Ex.* xxiv. 8) and in Allusion to the Sprinklings of the Blood of the Passover, and of the annual Sacrifices on the great Day of Atonement, (*Ex.* xii. 21, 22, and *Lev.* xvi. 14) and to various other Sprinklings for legal Purification, may be called *the Sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus Christ*; (1 Pet. i. 2) which effectually procures, and cries aloud in the intercessory Pleas of the Mediator, and in the Consciences of Believers, when applied and rested upon by Faith, not only for better Things than the Blood of righteous *Abel*, which was shed by his wicked Brother, and cried to Heaven, not for Mercy and Forgiveness,* but for Vengeance to come down upon *Cain* his Murderer;

* *Speaks better Things than that of Abel*, or *than Abel*, (παρα τον Αβελ) seems, as I apprehend, to allude to the Blood of the *Sacrifice*, which *Abel* offered, and was acceptable for obtaining Mercy, through

derer; and still *speaks* awful Warnings to all others of his persecuting Spirit: But the Blood of Christ speaks for *absolutely* the best of Things, even to his Crucifiers, and to all Sorts of Sinners that believe in him; and it speaks for *comparatively* better Things, than even the Blood of *the Sacrifice* pleaded for, which righteous *Abel* offered by Faith with Acceptance to God (*Chap.* xi. 4, compared with *Gen.* iv. 4) under that dark Dispensation; which did not give so evident Assurances of such great and glorious Blessings, as are now clearly revealed in the Gospel, and actually brought in by Christ, and enjoy'd with rich Advantage by every true Believer; and as neither *Abel*'s, nor any other typical Sacrifices, that were afterwards appointed under the Law, could possibly obtain. (*Chap.* x. 4.)

25 *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not, who refused him that spake on Earth, much more* shall not *we* escape, *if we turn away from him that* speaketh *from Heaven:*

25. Since therefore the Gospel-State is so incomparably more excellent, encouraging and inviting, than that of the Law, Take special Heed, watch and pray, and cautiously beware, as ever ye value your own Salvation, lest, through Temptation, Worldly-mindedness and Unbelief, or through Hankerings after the *Mosaic* Law, any of you, either refuse to embrace, and give yourselves up *unto Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant, whose Blood speaks better Things than that of Abel*; (ver. 24) or lest any of you, who have made a Profession of his Name, afterward renounce him, and so despise and reject, instead of hearing and obeying him, who now speaks to you all the gracious, endearing and important Things of the new Covenant, by his Word and the Ministry of it, and by his Spirit in miraculous Gifts to confirm it, and in the Hearts of those of you that are true Believers: For if the People of *Israel* did not escape Vengeance, but the Carcases of many of them fell in the Wilderness, who refused to hear and yield Obedience to *Moses*, and thrusted him from them, (*Acts* vii. 39) notwithstanding all their high Professions before of hearkening to him, (*Ex.* xx. 19) who delivered the sacred Oracles from God to them, (χρηματίζοντα) and spake after an earthly Manner upon the Earth; much more impossible is it, that we should escape the dreadful Vengeance of eternal Fire, if any of us who live under the Gospel, which brings glad Tidings of a spi-

through Faith in the atoning Sacrifice of the Messiah. (See the Note on *Chap.* xi. 4.) I therefore choose to consider it in Allusion to *this*, rather than (as most Expositors understand it) to the Blood of *Abel himself*, which *Cain* shed: For the Argument to show the Excellency of the Gospel-Dispensation, above that at Mount *Sinai*, sinks exceeding low, if it be considered only as speaking better Things, than the *innocent Blood* of *Abel*, which was unrighteously shed, and cried to Heaven for Vengeance on the Head of *Cain*, and brought a Curse, instead of a Blessing, upon him, *Gen.* iv. 10, 11; and so spoke for the worst of Evils, instead of any Good to come upon him, and upon all Persecutors unto Death, like him. But the Blood of the *Sacrifice*, which *Abel* offered in Faith, and was signally accepted of God, spoke for *good Things*, for himself, though not for others, nor with such Efficacy, and to so rich Advantage and Extent, as the Blood of Christ speaks for under the Gospel-State; and so was a proper Instance to shew that all the Sacrifices, afterwards instituted under the Law, were not so available, as the Sacrifice of Christ.

ritual

ritual and eternal Salvation, should, through Unbelief, reject, despise and disobey him, who is the *Lord from Heaven*, and personally came from Heaven to set up this blessed Dispensation; who also, being now ascended up to Heaven, still further reveals it in all its Spirituality, Light and Glory, and speaks heavenly Things from thence in his Apostles, by the immediate Inspiration of his Spirit, and by miraculous Wonders of Mercy and Goodness to confirm them; (1 *Pet.* i. 12) and speaks them with heavenly Light and Energy in the Souls of true Believers. It must needs be an inexcusably aggravated and destructive Sin, to reject his Authority in this most illustrious Dispensation of his Grace.

26 Whose Voice then shook the Earth: But now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the Earth only, but also Heaven.

26. Whose Voice, at the Delivery of the Law on Mount *Sinai*, was with such divine Majesty, sovereign Authority and almighty Power, as to cause that earthly Mountain to move, shake and tremble greatly, (*Ex.* xix. 18, and *Ps.* lxviii. 8) and as to make a terrible Commotion by the shocking Prodigies which attended it, and among the People all around; an Account of which we have already related. (*ver.* 18—21.) * But now, under the New Testament-Dispensation, he was to make another, more remarkable and important Shaking, according to his Promise with respect to a better State of Things in the Gospel-Church, (*Hag.* ii. 6) where he says, *yet once again, I will shake, not only the Earth*, as I did at the giving of the Law, and setting up that Dispensation, which was of an earthly Nature; but in a little while, compared with the whole Duration of that Oeconomy, I will also shake down the civil and ecclesiastical State of the *Jews*; which was to be fulfilled in the Destruction of the City and Temple of *Jerusalem*, and which, not merely in a natural, but especially in a figurative Sense, may be called shaking both Earth and Heaven.

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* *His Promise of shaking not the Earth only, but also Heaven*, manifestly relates to the great Alterations that should be made by the *first*, and not the *second* Coming of Christ: For in the Prophecy, *Hag.* ii. 6, he said he would do it in a *little while*; and the Alterations which ensued upon Christ's appearing in the Flesh, and not those which will be made at the Day of Judgment, suited the Design of the Apostle's Argument, which was to shew the superior Excellency of the Gospel-State, in Opposition to the *Mosaic* Dispensation. And *the Earth* might be said at this Time to be shaken, as there were great Commotions in the Earth at the Birth of Christ, and by the Miracles he wrought, and the Earthquake that attended his Resurrection. *The Heavens* also were shaken, when the extraordinary Star appeared to the wise Men of the East, and a Multitude of the heavenly Host celebrated the Praises of his Birth; and when the Heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost descended upon him, and God the Father declared with an audible Voice from Heaven, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*; and when the Sun was darkned at his Death, and the like.—But the Expressions, quoted by the Apostle, may rather be taken in a *metaphorical* Sense, relating to the Dissolution of the Church and State of the *Jews*: For the overthrowing of Nations and Kingdoms is in prophetic Language represented by *shaking the Earth, and the Heavens*, as in *Hag.* ii. 21, 22, *Is.* xiii. 13, and *Joel* iii. 15. And the *shaking of the Earth and Heavens*, here intended, carries our Thoughts back to the Mount *Sinai*-Dispensation, and the Gospel-Church State, which had been set in Opposition one to the other in the foregoing Verses; (18—24) and so we are naturally led to understand by it, the *removing of those Things that are shaken, as of Things that are made, that the Things which cannot be shaken may remain*; and are called a *Kingdom which cannot be shaken.* ver. 27, 28.

27. And

27 *And this* Word, *Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those Things that are shaken, as of Things that are made, that those Things which cannot be shaken may remain.*

27. And this Manner of expressing it, *yet once more*, evidently signifies, that there should be but one other eminent and thoroughly shaking Dispensation, after the former; and that the *Jewish* State (inclusive of its political and religious Constitution) should be dissolved, in which many Things, essential to the legal Dispensation, were made by the Hands of Men, such as the Tabernacle, Temple, and all its Utensils, and were appointed of God to be continued only *till the Time of Reformation*, (Chap. ix. 10) to the End that (ἵνα) the glorious Privileges and Blessings, Worship and Ordinances of the New Testament-Church, which are of an unalterable Constitution, and are introduced instead of the former, might abide without any Change to the End of the World.

28 *Wherefore, we receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have Grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with Reverence and godly Fear.*

28. Since therefore we of the Gospel-Church are made Partakers of, and actually receive by Faith, the glorious Benefits of the New Testament-Dispensation, which, under Christ's Rule and Government, is a Kingdom of Grace, now set up in the World, and is not liable to be removed, as the Old Testament-Dispensation has been; but remains unalterably the same, till it shall issue in the Kingdom of Glory, Let us, according to the Nature, Provisions and Encouragements of this Gospel-Kingdom, which is the free Effect of divine Favour, and so may be called *Grace*, hold it fast in our Faith and Profession of it *; and let us be concerned to make a careful conscientious Use of all the Means it affords us, for every Supply, Increase and Exercise of Grace, by which we may be enabled to serve, worship and glorify God in an acceptable Manner, through Jesus Christ, with an humble and holy Reverence of his divine Majesty, and with a religious Fear of him, under a Sense of his Greatness and Glory, and of our own Nothingness, Sinfulness and Vileness, and of the Danger of trifling with him in our Approaches to him, and Walk before him.

29 *For our God is a consuming Fire.*

29. For the Lord, who is our Covenant-God by visible Dispensation, as we are professing Christians, and is effectually so, by special Grace, to those of us who are true Believers, is no less jealous for his own Glory, with respect to his Worship according to Institution now, than he was when he gave the Law at Mount *Sinai:* (Ex. xx. 5.) And as he will still be sanctified *by them that come nigh him*; (Lev. x. 3) so his righteous Indignation burns against those that are not in Christ, but reject him and the Blessings of his Kingdom, by Unbelief, and cast off his Fear; and he, in the Strictness of his Justice, and Purity of his Holiness, is as terribly destructive, like a consuming Fire, even to those who are his

* *Grace* may here be taken, either for the *free Favour* of God, or for the *Effect* of it, in gracious Qualities. And Dr. *Whitby* observes from the Critics, that the *Verb* render'd to *have* (ἔχειν) is often put for to *retain* or *hold fast*. (κατέχειν).

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Covenant-People by external Profession, but are unmindful of his Covenant, under the Gospel, as he threatened to be to the carnal *Israelites*, under the Law. (*Deut.* iv. 23, 24, and ix. 3.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

How great is our Encouragement to Faith and Patience! We have a Cloud of eminent Examples in the Old Testament-Saints, and the brightest of all in our suffering Lord and Saviour, to animate our running the Christian-Race through all Difficulties till it be completed. In order hereunto, Let us cast off every thing that would incumber us, and every Sin that we are most incident to, and look to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of Faith, for all Assistances, Victory and Triumph, that we may be conformable to him, who, for the Joy which was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the Shame, and is now exalted to his Throne. Our Sufferings have not yet been unto Death, as they might have been, and were in many of the antient Worthies, and in our blessed Lord himself; and whatsoever they be, if we are the Children of God, they are all wisely ordered and graciously over-ruled by our heavenly Father, in a Way of special Love, for our Amendment in this imperfect World. For what Son is there, whom the Father chastens not for his Faults? But O how difficult is it to steer right between despising the Chastnings of the Lord, and fainting under them! And with how much greater Reverence and Submission should we receive the Corrections of the Father of our Spirits, than can be due from Children to their Fathers of the Flesh! Tho' such Chastnings are in their own Nature grievous, they are nevertheless profitable, to make us Partakers of his Holiness, and to produce the peaceable Fruits of Righteousness, for living to him here and with him hereafter. How deeply concerned therefore ought we to be, that no Afflictions may ever turn us aside from the Way of God's Testimonies, or make us halt in our holy Profession; but that we may advance forward with Vigour in the streight Paths of Truth and Duty, and may be exemplary, and encouraging to others, under their Fears, Despondencies and Dangers! And O what amiable Companions are Peace and Holiness! These should be unitedly pursued: But if we cannot obtain Peace upon good Terms with Men, we should remember that Holiness is absolutely necessary to the beatific Vision and Enjoyment of God. And how dreadful is it to fall short of his Grace under a Profession of the Gospel! All Principles and Practices, that lead to Apostacy, will, one Way or other, be a Root of Bitterness, and endanger Infection to the Church of Christ, whenever they break out. How should we dread the first Beginnings of Apostacy, lest, at length, it should run into all Uncleanness, and profane Contempt of every Thing that is sacred, like *Esau*'s despising and selling his Birthright, which could never be recovered! How terrible is the Voice of the Law, as delivered at Mount *Sinai*, and as roaring in the Consciences of awaken'd Sinners! It spreads Blackness and Darkness through their Souls; burns like a tormenting Fire within them; overwhelms them like an horrible Tempest; summons them, as with the Sound of a Trumpet, to appear at God's awful Bar for Judgment; and makes them dread to hear of any thing more of its rigorous Terrors, which they know not how to bear. Yea, the holiest of Men, like *Moses* himself, must tremble, when they think of God's infinite Purity and unyielding Justice, as considered only according to the tremendous Revelation of them in his righteous Law. But how encouraging, comforting and glorious, are the Discoveries and Blessings of Gospel-Grace! Here Deliverance from the Law and all its Terrors, and the richest Privileges are set before condemned Sinners; and Believers in Jesus have free Admission to all heavenly Blessings with the New Testament-Church: For the living God dwells after a more spiritual and excellent Manner in them, than ever he did in the Temple on Mount *Sion*, and in the beloved City of *Jerusalem*. They have delightful and beneficial Communion by Faith and Love with innumerable Myriads of holy Angels; with the Spirits of departed Saints, which are made perfect in Happiness and Holiness; and with the universal Church of militant and triumphant Believers, whose Names are written in Heaven: And they have humble Boldness of Access to God, the Judge of the whole World, as they come by Faith to him through the Mediator of the new Covenant, under the Sprinklings of his Blood, which speaks better Things than the Blood, even of *Abel*'s Sacrifice. How should we rejoice and bless God for the Gospel-Dispensation, which brings us to our only Remedy against the Terrors of the Law, and to a happy Communion

with God and Chriſt, Angels and Saints! This is a Conſtitution of a ſpiritual and heavenly Nature, and is revealed and confirmed immediately from Heaven by our bleſſed Lord, whoſe Voice ſhook the Earth in delivering the Law at Mount *Sinai*, and who made a moſt excellent Revolution, which may be called his ſhaking Heaven as well as Earth, in ſetting aſide the *Moſaic* Diſpenſation, and introducing that of the Goſpel-State in its Stead. How firmly is this glorious Diſpenſation of Light and Grace eſtabliſhed, to continue without any Change to the Conſummation of all Things! It conſiſts of ſuch a ſpiritual Church-State, with reſpect to its Worſhip and Ordinances, Privileges and Bleſſings, as cannot be ſhaken; and is a Kingdom which cannot be moved. O with what Spirituality and Solemnity ſhould we worſhip God according to this heavenly Eſtabliſhment! Though he is a reconciled God and Father in Chriſt to all ſincere Believers, he is a devouring Fire to all Neglecters and Abuſers of his Grace, and particularly to all Hypocrites and Apoſtates. How highly therefore doth it concern us to receive and hold faſt the Goſpel of the Kingdom with Faith and Love; and to have the Truth of Grace in our own Souls, whereby we may be enabled to ſerve God acceptably, through Chriſt, with all devotional Reverence of his ſacred Majeſty, and filial Fear of offending him!

C H A P. XIII.

The Apoſtle exhorts to the various Duties of brotherly Love, Hoſpitality, Chriſtian-Sympathy, Marriage-Chaſtity, Contentedneſs with ſuch worldly Circumſtances as Providence allots to us, aud paying due Reſpect to the Inſtruction, Example and Memory of faithful Paſtors, 1—8. *Cautions againſt being carried away with* Jewiſh *Doctrines and Ceremonies, which are fulfilled in Chriſt, the Goſpel High-Prieſt, Altar and Sacrifice,* 9—14. *Adds further Exhortations to Duties, that relate to God, to our Neighbour, and them that are ſet over us in the Lord,* 15—17. *Deſires the Prayers of the* Hebrews, *and prays for them,* 18—21. *Recommends what he had wrote in this Epiſtle to their ſerious Conſideration: Gives them Hopes of his own and* Timothy's *coming to ſee them; and concludes with his uſual Salutations and Benediction,* 22—25.

T E X T.	*P A R A P H R A S E.*
1 LET *brotherly Love continue.*	1. LET it be your earneſt Care and Endeavour, that as ye have begun; (*Chap.* vi. 10) ſo ye may go on to maintain and cultivate an abiding and growing Exerciſe of a brotherly and affectionate Temper and Behaviour, in all Offices of Friendſhip one towards another, and towards all your Fellow-Chriſtians, who are Members of the ſame Family, Children of the ſame heavenly Father, Brethren in Chriſt your elder Brother, Partakers of the ſame Grace, and Heirs together of the ſame Glory, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, or whatſoever Denomination they are diſtinguiſhed by.
2 *Be not forgetful to entertain Strangers:*	2. Extend your brotherly Compaſſion, in a ſpecial Manner, to ſuch honeſt religious Strangers,* as are perſecuted for Righte-

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* Though it is indeed *common Humanity* to ſhew Kindneſs to neceſſitous Strangers, whether they be truly religious, or not, and was enjoined by the Law to *Iſrael*, Deut. x. 19. as *Hoſpitality in general* also

For thereby some have entertained Angels unawares.

Righteousness Sake, and driven from their own Habitations and Country; or as voluntarily go about to preach the Gospel. (*Acts* viii. 1, and 2 *John*, ver. 5—8.) Don't despise or neglect these, or withold your Charity from, and harden your Hearts against them; but be always ready, according to your Abilities and Opportunities, to entertain them with Liberality and Friendship: Receive them into your Hearts and Houses; and supply them with needful Accommodations and Assistances of every Kind. This will be an Honour to God and Christian-Religion, a seasonable Relief to those, whom his Providence casts in your Way; and a noble Satisfaction to your own Minds in Reflection upon it, as it has formerly been to others: For by this generous Temper toward Strangers, some of our religious Ancestors, such as *Abraham* and *Lot*, (Gen. xviii. 2—8, and xix. 1—3.) had the Honour of entertaining Angels, * whom, by their Appearance, they then took to be only good Men.

3 *Remember them that are in Bonds, as bound with them*; and *them which suffer Adversity, as being yourselves also in the Body.*

3. Another Branch of Duty, which belongs to, and is included in *brotherly Love*, and which I would earnestly recommend to you, is, that as ye have had Compassion on me in my Bonds; (*Chap.* x. 34.) so ye would bear upon your Hearts, pity and pray for, tenderly sympathize with, and, as far as in you lies, contribute to the Relief and Comfort of, and, if Opportunity offers, make friendly Visits, and give all possible Assistance to, those faithful Professors and Ministers of Christ, that are cast into Prison, and laid under Bonds, for his and the Gospel's Sake: Do this, like Persons embarked in the same glorious Cause, for which they suffer, and that compassionate them as feelingly, as if ye yourselves were actually in like distressed Circumstances with them. And I beseech you to be as mindful of, and tenderly affected towards all your Fellow-Christians, that suffer, if not unto Imprisonment, yet, Reproaches, the

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also is by the Apostle, *Rom.* xii. 13, and *Gal.* vi. 10; and the very *Heathens* practised it in the generous and compassionate Entertainment they gave to *Paul* and the shipwreck'd Company, who were entire Strangers to them, *Acts* xxviii. 2, 7: Yet as this Exhortation stands among those, that relate to the benevolent Carriage of Christians one towards another, as such, according to their various Circumstances, it is to be considered as one Branch of *brotherly Love*, which was to be shewn in entertaining Strangers of that Character.

* If (as is highly probable) the Apostle here refers to the Entertainment, that *Abraham* and *Lot* gave to the Angels, which appeared to them in Human Form; one of those Angels, who appeared to *Abraham*, is all along represented in the History, under the Title of *Jehovah*, who spoke of, and conversed with *Abraham*; Gen. xviii. 1, xiii. 17—22; and so was not a *created* Angel, but *the Son of God*, the Angel of the Covenant. (See the Note on *Acts* vii. 38.) But as *he* continued with *Abraham*, and only the other two Angels were entertained by *Lot*, it could not have been said with Propriety, in the *plural* Number, (as has been supposed would have strengthened the Argument) that *some* (τινες) entertained Angels, *one of which was the Son of God*; for *Lot* did not entertain *him*; and if they both had done this, it was no more than hath been said of several, who entertained our blessed Lord, while he was upon Earth, under the Character of a mere Man, or Messenger from God at most, while they did not know him to be the Son of God, or the true Messiah. Instances of which we have in the *Pharisee*, who invited him to eat with him at his House; and in two of his own Disciples, who took him for a Stranger, and constrained him to eat with them, while *their Eyes were holden that they should not know him*. (Luke vii. 36, and xxiv. 16—18, 29—31.)

spoiling

ſpoiling of their Goods, and other Hardſhips on Chriſt's Account, or that labour under grievous Afflictions and Tribulations of any Kind; conſidering yourſelves, as Members of the ſame myſtical Body with them; (1 *Cor.* xii. 12, 13, 25, 26, 27.) and reflecting upon your own State and Condition, as liable and expoſed to the like Trials, while ye, as well as they, dwell in mortal Fleſh, and have no Security but that your own Lot may ſoon be the ſame with theirs.

4 *Marriage* is *honourable in all, and the Bed undefiled: But Whoremongers and Adulters God will judge.*

4. Let none caſt a Reproach upon the Ordinance of Marriage, * which God hath inſtituted and bleſſed, and given Laws about; (*Gen.* ii. 23, 24, and *Mat.* xix. 5.) which Chriſt honoured with his Preſence; (*John* ii. 1—11.) and which was appointed by the God of Nature and Providence, for producing a legitimate Offspring, for the Harmony of Families and the Good of Society, and for a proper Remedy againſt all Uncleanneſs: And provided this Relation be entered into, with the mutual free Conſent of only one ſuitable Man and Woman, and within preſcribed Bounds for preventing inceſtuous Cohabitation, (*Lev.* xviii. 6—18.) it is ſo far from being in itſelf unworthy, or unlawful, that it is a very honourable State of Life, in both Sexes of all Ranks, Degrees and Profeſſions; and is ſo accounted by all civilized Nations: And let thoſe who are in a State of Wedlock, preſerve the Honour of the Marriage-Bed inviolated, by an adultrous Uſe of other Men or Women, and by a ſuitable and ſeaſonable Performance of the Marriage-Duty, (1 *Cor.* vii. 2—5.) which will put an Honour upon it. But as to thoſe who are guilty in Thought or Deed, (*Mat.* v. 28.) either of ſimple Fornication in a ſingle State, or of Adultery in a married State, God will often puniſh them in this World; or, at furtheſt, will call them to a ſevere Account, and condemn their Sins, and the impenitent Practiſers of them, in the Day of Judgment, and exclude them from his heavenly Kingdom. (1 *Cor.* vi. 9, 10.)

5 Let your *Converſation* be *without Covetouſneſs*, and be

5. Another Duty, which I would recommend, as of general Uſe to you all, and of high Importance to your Chriſtian-Character, is, to beware of Covetouſneſs [illegible] is

* There were, it ſeems, in thoſe Days, ſome that condemned *Matrimony*, as an *impure* and [illegible] *State*, inconſiſtent with the ſtrict Chaſtity that is neceſſary to the Perfection of Religion; while others accounted *ſimple Fornication* to be *no Sin*; and the Apoſtle foreſaw by the Spirit of Prophecy, that ſuch like pernicious Notions would be propagated in the Apoſtacy of after-Ages. (See the Note on 1 *Tim.* iv. 1.) In Oppoſition therefore to both theſe Errors, he recommends a married State, as not only lawful, but honourable, provided its Ends be purſued with Fidelity, and a becoming Chaſtity of Mind, to the preventing of Fornication and Adultery.—As the *Verb Subſtantive* is wanting in the *Greek* to compleat this Sentence, our Tranſlators and others ſupply it by *is*, (ἐστι) and ſo make it an *Affirmative* Propoſition; and others ſupply it by *let it be*, (ἔστω) and ſo make it a *preceptive* or *exhortative* Propoſition, juſt in the ſame Manner as the next Verſe, (where is the ſame Omiſſion in the Original) is rendered, *Let your Converſation be without Covetouſneſs.* But as it is uncertain, in which of theſe Ways the *Verb may* be here beſt ſupplied, both are taken into the Paraphraſe.

content with such Things as ye have. For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Degrees and various Ways of working; (*Luke* xii. 15.) which are inconsistent with the forementioned Duties of brotherly Love, Hospitality, and Compassion to them that are in Adversity, (*ver.* 1—3.) Let there be no immoderate Desires, or Pursuits after the Things of this World, in your Temper, Traffic, and Manner of Life; in setting your Hearts upon them, and making an Idol of them, as if they were your chief Good; in being over eager to get them, especially by any fraudulent, unjust, or oppressive Means; in grudging any proper Expence for the reasonable Support and Comfort of yourselves and Families, according to your respective Stations; in being loth to communicate of them, as Occasions require, for the Glory of God, the Relief of the Poor and Afflicted, and the Service of civil and religious Interests; and in thinking it too great an Hardship to part with them, when, for the Sake of your Profession of Christ and his Gospel, your persecuting Enemies would deprive you of them. All these are plain Indications of Covetousness; and *if any Man*, in this Sense, *love the World*, *the Love of the Father is not in him.* (1 John ii. 15.) But, in Opposition hereunto, it is incumbent upon you, as Christians, to be thoroughly reconciled to, and well-pleased with your present Circumstances, even the meanest and most afflicted of them, without envying the Ease and Affluence of others; as being fully persuaded that the Things, which God deals out to you from Day to Day, in the Way of your Duty, * are better than your Deserts, and are, upon the Whole, what he knows to be most for his own Glory, and fittest and best for you: For he, who is the Almighty, the only living and true God, whose Kingdom rules over all, and whose Faithfulness is unchangeable, like himself, has said, in a Way of free and absolute Promise to *Joshua*, (Chap. i. 5.) which stands on Record for the Encouragement of all his People in their various Straits and Difficul-

* As the Exhortation to Christian-*Contentment with such Things as we have*, relating to the present Life, is by no Means to be understood to countenance Sloth or Idleness in our secular Callings, which is every where severely reproved and condemned in Scripture; so the Promise of God, *not to leave, nor forsake us*, is to be considered with regard to any Difficulties, or Dangers that may attend us in the Discharge of such Duties, as God calls us to. And though this Promise was made *personally* to *Joshua* on a particular Occasion, (*Jos.* i. 5.) which the Apostle seems most immediately to refer to; yet 'tis equally applicable, as a Promise of God's gracious Covenant, to all true Believers, and may be pleaded and relied upon, by every one of them in all Trials, as if it had been *personally* made to himself; (See *Rom.* xv. 4, and 2 *Cor.* i. 20.) and this very Promise, for Substance at least, was made, not to *Joshua* only, but likewise to *Abraham*, and recited for *Jacob*'s Encouragement; (*Gen.* xxviii. 15.) as also to *Solomon*, (1 *Chron.* xxviii. 20.) and to the Church of *Israel.* (1 *Sam.* xii. 22, and *Is.* xli. 10, 17.) Accordingly, our Apostle quotes it with an Application to every individual Believer, as God's saying in the *singular* Number, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee:* And the more effectually to silence the Objections of Unbelief, and the more strongly to assure us, that there shall be no Failure in the Performance of this Promise, There are five Negatives, as it lies in the *Greek*, and may be literally rendered in the Stile of peremptory Vehemence, *No, I will not leave thee, no, no, I will not forsake thee.* (ου μη σε ανω, ουδ', ου μη σε εγκαταλιπω) And this evidently carries the Force of a contrary strong Affirmative of his being with us at all Times.

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ties, and equally belongs to every true Believer, in the Use of proper Means, as if it were directed to him, by Name, in all his Trials, with respect to temporal, as well as spiritual Concerns, Be thou assured that I will not leave thee to thyself, nor in the Hands of any of thine Enemies, nor in any Wants or Dangers; nor will I ever utterly forsake or abandon thee, at any Time, or upon any Account, or in any Circumstance whatsoever; no, I will by no Means do it; but will certainly be with thee to *strengthen, help, and uphold thee, with the Right Hand of my Righteousness,* (Is. xli. 10.) all the Days of thy Life, and in Death itself. *I will guide thee with my Counsel, and afterward receive thee to Glory.* (Ps. lxxiii. 24.)

6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what Man shall do unto me.

6. So that we believing and resting upon this comprehensive Promise, as applicable to ourselves, may, and ought to say with humble Confidence, and sweet Composure of Spirit, each one for himself; and should openly avow it, with holy Boldness in the Profession of our Faith in God, as the *Psalmist* did amidst all his Dangers and Distresses, (*Ps.* lvi. 4, 11, and cxviii. 6.) Whatsoever my Straits and Difficulties, Wants and Troubles be, the Lord Jehovah himself, the everlasting God, who faints not, nor is weary, is my Support, Succour and Defence; and having him on my Side to take my Part, to revive my Soul with Grace, and over-rule all Events for my Good, I will not be afraid of the very worst that the most powerful, subtle and inveterate of all mine Enemies, who are but Men of weak and mortal Flesh, can do against me; as though he, who is my Helper, were not an over-match for them. *If God be for us, who can be against us?* (Rom. viii. 31.) And *if we be followers of that which is good, who is he that shall harm us?* (1 Peter iii. 13.)

7 Remember them which have the Rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God: Whose Faith follow, conside-

7. As ever ye would practise the *Duties*, and have your Faith strengthened in the *Promises* but now mentioned, See that ye pay a due Regard to the Memory of those deceased faithful Ministers,* who were your spiritual Guides, under Christ their great Lord and Master; and often call to Mind the Doctrines, Commands, and Promises, which they de-

* *Remember them which have the Rule over you,* (μνημονευετε των ηγουμενων υμων) literally translated is *Remember your Guides*, or *Leaders*, without restraining it to those that had then the pastoral Care of them, who are spoken of *ver.* 17; and the remaining Part of this Verse, which mentions *their having spoken to them the Word of God,* and *the End of their Conversation,* seems plainly to interpret it of *former* Pastors, who were then deceased; and at the same Time shows that their *Rule over them*, as our Translation hath it, consisted in their *going before them,* as their *Guides* or *Leaders* in Doctrine, Discipline and exemplary Conversation: And indeed *the Rule* of Evangelical Pastors lies, not in giving Laws, broaching Doctrines, or exercising any Authority of their own; but in explaining, establishing and defending the Laws and Doctrines of Christ, and inculcating them on the Consciences of his People, by his sole Authority, and exemplifying them in their own Faith and holy Conversation, according to what they have received by their Commission, and can prove that they have received them from him, as contained in his Word. All Pretences to Church-Authority beyond this, is really a Usurpation, an Anti-Christian-Lordship, instead of being intirely subordinate, as it ever ought to be, to the Authority of Christ.

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ring the End of their Conversation.

livered to you according to the Word of God, that only Rule of Faith, Worship, and Obedience. Remember them in such a Manner, as to embrace, and adhere to the pure Doctrines of Faith, which they preached to you, and as to imitate their own Faith therein, and their Faithfulness in professing and publishing them, together with all the excellent and holy Fruits thereof, as they appeared in their Lives. And ye ought to be excited to this by seriously reflecting upon what ye have seen, or heard, and observed of the peaceful and joyous Manner, with which they finished the Course of their good Conversation in Christ, and obtained a noble Victory over, and happy Exit, or Outlet (ἔκβασιν) from, all the Troubles and Dangers that here attended them; how they then escaped from them all, and went with Triumph to Glory. This may well animate you to tread in their Steps.

8 *Jesus Christ the same Yesterday, and To day, and for ever.*

8. For, though some of your Ministers are gone, and others are going off the Stage; yet the Redeemer and Head of the Church ever lives, Jesus Christ, the Object, Author and Finisher of your Faith, is unchangeably the same in his divine Person, * as from everlasting to everlasting God; and is the same in his Love to his People, in his Care of them, and in his Offices for them, and Promises to them, as their only Saviour through all Generations: He ever was the same *heretofore* in the Virtue and Efficacy of his Undertakings and Performances to Old Testament-Believers, and to all that have since died and got safe to Heaven; and he is still the same to all New Testament-Believers *now living* upon the Earth; and will be the same to all *succeeding Ages of them*, until the Consummation of all Things; and the same to them all for ever afterwards: And therefore ye ought to be stedfast in the Faith, as ye have been taught; and to have the same Trust and Dependence upon him, as your faithful Guides had, the End of whose Conversation was with Honour and Joy.

9 *Be not carried about with diverse and strange Doctrines, for*

9. Take heed then lest, by departing from Christ, † and from the Doctrines and Examples of your former Guides, as far as they followed him, Ye, *like Children, be tossed to and*

* There is a strong Emphasis in this Word *the same*; (ὁ αὐτὸς) for it is a Characteristic of the unchangeable Permanency of the great Jehovah of *Israel*, the *I am*, Pſ. cii. 27; and it had been applied to Christ in *Chap.* i. 12; (See the Note there) and considering the Connection with the foregoing Verse, with which the Apostle brings it in here, it sets the Unchangeableness of Christ in Opposition to the uncertain Continuance of dying Ministers.

† This, and the following Verses, may be considered, as founded upon what had been just before said of *Jesus Christ*'s *being the same, Yesterday, and To-day, and for ever.* And the Doctrines, which the Apostle more particularly warned the *Hebrews* against, were such as related to the *Jewish* Meats, that were under the Law to be esteemed clean or unclean, and to be eaten or not, according as they were or were not to be, or had or had not been, offered on the Altar; and consequently extended to the Sacrifices and the whole Frame of the *Mosaic* Institution, which had a particular Reference to *the Altar*, and was sanctified by it. This gives us a proper *Clew* for understanding the Meaning of these Verses, which otherwise appear to be very obscure in their Connection.

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it is a good Thing that the Heart be establish-ed with Grace, not with Meats, which have not profited them that have been occu-pied therein.

fro, and carried about with every Wind of Doctrine, by the Slight of Men, and cunning Craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; (Ephes. iv. 14.) and, particularly, lest ye be fluctuating, and whirled about, like a Ship in a Storm, or like Clouds by the Wind, and be unsettled in your Minds by various Doctrines about several *Jewish* Rites and Ceremonies, which are different from, foreign to, and inconsistent with, the Simplicity of the Gospel of Christ; but which erroneous Teachers insist upon, as necessary still to be observed in order to Salvation. (*Acts* xv. 1.) Beware of being misled by these false Notions: For 'tis every way incomparably better * that the Soul, inclusive of all its Faculties, be fully persuaded of, and stedfastly fixed in its Dependence upon, the free Love and Favour of God in Christ, as revealed in the Gospel for the Remission of Sin, Peace of Conscience, and Acceptance with God to eternal Life; and that it be fortified against all Wavering about the Truth and Importance of this Doctrine, by an Experience of its Efficacy in a Work of heart-changing Grace, than vainly to imagine that these Blessings can be obtained by Observances of the ceremonial Law, which had a peculiar Reference to, and were sanctified by the Altar, and *stood in Meats, and Drinks, and divers Washings, and carnal Ordinances, imposed upon the* Jews, *until the Time of Reformation*; but which, as *they could not make him that did the Service perfect, as pertaining to the Conscience*: (Chap. ix. 9, 10) so they of themselves neither were, nor could be, of any spiritual and saving Advantage to those, who were most conversant with them, even during the legal Dispensation; much less can they be so now; but, on the contrary, are very pernicious to those that have continued to keep up a religious Regard to them; the Altar itself, and all the Rites and Ceremonies dependent upon it, being now of no further Use, since all that was typified thereby is fulfilled in Christ.

10 *We have an Altar whereof they have no Right to eat, which serve the Tabernacle.*

10. We, of the New Testament-Church, have an incomparably better Altar and Sacrifice of a spiritual Nature in Christ, *who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without Spot to God*: (Chap. ix. 14) and so was, in his own Person, the Priest, Altar, and Sacrifice too, whose divine Nature supported, and gave an infinite Value to his Sacrifice, as the Altar sanctified the Gift: (*Mat.* xxiii. 19) And this furnishes out a Feast to our Faith, in receiving the Blessings of his Purchase with Application to ourselves, which they have no Authority, Title, or Claim to be Partakers of, who still abide by, and live in the Observation of, the external and typical Services of the *Jewish* Tabernacle, to make Atonement for Sin; or who, acting the Part of *Levitical* Priests,

* The Word here render'd a *good Thing* (καλὸν) is translated *better*, Mat. xviii. 8, 9; and in that Sense, I apprehend 'tis most fitly to be taken here.

perform

perform the Offices of it for that Purpose. (τῃ σκηνῃ λατρευοντες) They have no more Right to feast upon this Sacrifice of Christ, than even the Priests themselves had to eat any Part of the Sin-Offerings, which were to be totally consumed. (*Lev.* vi. 30.)

11 For the Bodies of those Beasts, whose Blood is brought into the Sanctuary by the High Priest for Sin, are burnt without the Camp.

11. For according to the Appointment of God in the Law, with respect to those Beasts, particularly Bulls and Goats for the Sin-Offering, (*Chap.* x. 4, 5, 6) the Blood of which was carried into the most holy Place by the High Priest, on the great Day of Atonement; It was ordered that the Bodies of those Sacrifices, together with their Skin and Dung should be burnt, and utterly consumed by Fire, in some Place, which lay out of the Borders of the Camp of *Israel:* (*Lev.* xvi. 27.) And so the Priests themselves were not allowed to eat of those expiatory Sacrifices, that were most eminently typical of the great propitiatory Sacrifice of Christ, which he offered *when he redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us*; (Gal. iii. 13) and with the Blood of which, *he entered in once into the holy Place, having obtained eternal Redemption for us.* (Chap. ix. 12.) This plainly shews, that no legal Services can make any one Partaker of his Sacrifice, which was prefigured by those, from the eating of which, even under the Law, both Priest and People were intirely excluded.

12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the People with his own Blood, suffered without the Gate.

12. Therefore, for the most evident and exact Accomplishment of the Thing signified by those eminently typical Sin-Offerings, Jesus also, our great High Priest, that he might effectually make Atonement for the Sins of his spiritual *Israel*,* and might consecrate them as a peculiar People to God, by shedding, not the Blood of Bulls and Goats, but his own most precious Blood, which he carried into the heavenly Sanctuary. This Jesus, I say, suffered his painful and ignominious Crucifixion, under the Curse of the Law, on Mount-Calvary, without the Gates of *Jerusalem*; (Luke xxiii. 33) which corresponded to the burning of the Bodies of the Sin-Offering, as Things devoted to Destruction, without the Borders of the Camp of *Israel*, while they sojourned in the Wilderness; which might also intimate Christ's leaving their Temple, City, Worship, Privileges and Church-State to fall into Ruins, and leaving them to perish in their Iniquities, who would obstinately adhere to that Constitution, and reject him, according to what he denounced when he was going out from thence. (*Mat.* xxiii. 38, 39, and *Luke* xxiii. 27—31.)

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* *Sanctifying the People* is to be understood, not of *internal Sanctification* by the Spirit, though that is purchased by the Blood of Christ; but 'tis to be taken here, as it frequently is in this Epistle, in a *sacrificial* Sense, for purging them from the Guilt of Sin, and consecrating them to God. (See the Note on *Chap.* ii. 11.)

13 Let us go forth therefore unto him without the Camp, bearing his Reproach.

13. Let us therefore, who make a Profession of his Name, and pretend to look for Salvation by him, go forth by Faith and Hope, Desire and Love, to him, as those that place all our Dependence upon him, and have all our Expectation from him, and that affectionately embrace him; leaving the *Jewish* Camp, and the Altar and Temple at *Jerusalem*, and all the legal Institutions pertaining to them, behind us, as having no Expectation from them, nor any further to do with them. Let us also do the like by this World, and all the Concernments of it, which answer to the *political* State of the *Jews*, first in their Camp, and afterwards in their City, that we may go out from all its Allurements and Enjoyments in our Hearts and Affections, and set them upon Christ, who suffered without the Gates of *Jerusalem*. Let us cheerfully and boldly own him under all the Scandal of his Cross; and be willing to bear the Reproach of believing in a crucified Jesus for all Salvation, how much soever it may be a Stumbling-block to the *Jews*, and Foolishness to the *Greeks*; (1 Cor. i. 23) and let us stand ready to suffer Shame, Contempt and Scorn for his Sake, as those who, in Imitation of him, have learned to deny ourselves, and take up our Cross and follow him. (*Mat.* xvi. 24.)

14 For here have we no continuing City, but we seek one to come.

14. For as the City of *Jerusalem* itself, † which succeeded the Camp of *Israel* in the Wilderness, as the Seat of *Jewish* Worship, and of all *political*, as well as *religious* Interests, shall soon be utterly destroyed, according to the Prediction of our blessed Lord; (*Luke* xix. 41—44) so we have no durable State of Happiness, or of settled Residence in this lower World, as if here were our Rest: But as *Pilgrims and Strangers upon Earth*, (Chap. xi. 13) and as Persons driven from Place to Place by our Persecuting Enemies, we, who believe in Jesus, realize by Faith, earnestly desire, look and long for, and, by all the Ways and Means of God's Appointment, seek after a future and better City; a State of everlasting Rest and Peace, Honour, Safety, Harmony and Delight, even one of a glorious heavenly Nature, *a City which has Foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God*, who, as our God, has *prepared it* for us. (*Chap.* xi. 10, 16.)

15 By him therefore let us offer the Sacrifice of Praise to God continually, that is, the Fruit of our *Lips, giving Thanks to his Name.*

15. In Consideration therefore of Christ's having redeemed, and consecrated us to God, by his own Blood, (See the Paraphrase and Note on *ver* 12) Let us ascribe all possible Glory to God through him, as our only High Priest, Sacrifice and Advocate, and as the Altar that sanctifies our Oblations: Let us abound in daily evangelical Offerings of Thanksgiving and Praise to God, every Morning, and Even-

† Here seems to be an Allusion to the City of *Jerusalem*, which, though it was *a City of Habitation*, that *Israel* sought after, while they were journeying in the Wilderness, and which God *led them to by a right Way*: Ps. cvii. 7; yet that City itself was now to be soon destroy'd, together with the whole Frame of its civil, as well as religious Privileges; and so was a fit Emblem of the fleeting, uncertain and transitory State of this World, and of all Things in it.

ing; and be ready to present them to him at all Times, in all Circumstances, and for every Thing, especially for Christ and all the Blessings of his Purchase; Offerings, not for Expiation, which is made perfectly and alone by his Sacrifice; but spiritual Offerings of grateful Acknowledgment, which we, as a holy evangelical Priesthood, are to *offer up, acceptably* to God by Jesus Christ; (1 *Peter* ii. 5) and which, in Distinction from the legal Offerings of Calves, Bullocks, and other Beasts, are metaphorically called *the Calves of our Lips*; (Hos. xiv. 2) and, in Allusion to the First-Fruits under the Law, may be stiled *the Fruit of our Lips*, as they consist of cheerful Confessions that all the Good we have, or hope for, proceeds from the free Favour of God, which is to be acknowledged to the Glory of his adorable Name, not only by every one singly for himself, but with united Hearts and Voices, and with social Celebrations of his Praise.

16 *But to do good, and to communicate, forget not: For with such Sacrifices God is well pleased.*

16. But while your Hearts and Lips are full of Gratitude and Praise to God, through Jesus Christ, and on his Account, for all his Mercies toward you, Take heed of thinking that this is the only Sacrifice of thankful Acknowledgment, that ye are bound to offer in Return for his Goodness. Be careful to cultivate a merciful, kind and generous Temper; and to abound in all Acts of Beneficence toward your Fellow-Creatures, that *as ye have Opportunity, ye may do good unto all Men, especially to them who are of the Houshold of Faith*; (Gal. vi. 10) and may give them a Partnership, or Communion with you (κοινωνιας) in your temporal good Things, by communicating to them as their Need requires: For this Sort of Offerings, as well as Praises, are to the Glory of God, when presented with Faith and Love, and in Obedience and Devotedness to him, and, tho' not meritorious, yet are agreeable to his gracious Nature and Will, and well-pleasing to him, (*Phil.* iv. 18) who accepts both you and them in the Beloved, in like Manner as he had a Respect to *Abel* and his Offering, which that righteous Man presented with Faith in the atoning Sacrifice of the promised Messiah. (*Gen.* iv. 4, and *Heb.* xi. 4. See the Note there.)

17 *Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit yourselves: For they watch for your Souls, as they that must give Account: That they may do it with Joy, and not with Grief: For that* is *unprofitable for you.*

17. As ever ye would improve all appointed Means of Grace and ministerial Assistances, for discharging the forementioned Duties; See that ye not only remember to imitate the Faith, and the exemplary Conversation of your deceased Pastors; (*ver.* 7) but that ye pay a religious Regard to the Doctrines and Precepts of those, who under our *Lord Jesus, that great* Shepherd of the Sheep, (*ver.* 20) are, or hereafter may be your spiritual Guides or Leaders, (ηγουμενοις υμων, See the Note on *ver.* 7) to conduct you in the Way of Truth and Holiness, *not as having Dominion over your Faith, but as Helpers of your Joy*: (2 Cor. i. 24.) And let it be a Point of Duty with you, to yield yourselves up to Christ's Authority

Authority in them, as *Overseers which the Holy Ghost has set over you.* (Acts xx. 28.) Attend upon, receive and comply with their Instructions, Exhortations, Admonitions and Reproofs, not with an implicit Faith and Obedience; but, as far as it appears, that they speak and act in the Name of Christ according to his Word: For as it is their proper Office, Business and Duty; so it is the Care and Concern of those of them, who understand, and are faithful to their important Trust, to watch over you in the Lord, with all Diligence according to the Ability which he gives them, that they may inspect your Principles, Temper and Behaviour; may guard and caution you against all Iniquity, Error and spiritual Danger; and may lay themselves out in the best Manner they can, to subserve the Edification and eternal Salvation of your immortal Souls: And they engage in this momentous Work with a Conscience toward God, as accountable Servants, that are daily spreading before him, in their Addresses to the Throne of Grace, what they observe of the State of their Flocks, and the Fruit of their Labours among them, whether it be hopeful, or discouraging; and are deeply sensible that they must give an Account to their Lord and Master in the Day of Judgment, how far they have been successful, as well as diligent and faithful in their Ministry. These solemn Thoughts awaken them to the greatest Zeal and Care in the Discharge of their Duty, that they may go on in their Work, and report the Fruits of it to God, with Cheerfulness and Delight, and not with mournful Hearts, while they are labouring in it; and may give up such a final Account of the Issues of their holy Ministrations, as shall be Matter of exceeding Joy and Triumph to them, (1 *Thess.* ii. 19) and not of sad Disappointment of their Hopes concerning you: For, were this to be the Case, they tremble to think that, though they themselves are *to God a sweet Savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish*; (2 Cor. ii. 15) yet all their Preaching, Watchfulness and Care, would be lost upon you; and, instead of your reaping any good Fruit from them, would turn to your greater Condemnation and Misery for ever.

18 *Pray for us: For we trust we have a good Conscience, in all Things willing to live honestly.*

18. We who are employ'd in the sacred Office of the Ministry, being sensible of the Awfulness of our Work, of the many Difficulties that attend it, and of our own utter Insufficiency, and Need of divine Assistance to carry us on in it, and to carry us through it, with Fidelity, Comfort and Advantage, earnestly request your continual importunate Prayers for us, that, whatever our Success be, we may be found faithful in the Day of Christ: For, notwithstanding all our Sufferings, and all that our Enemies may suggest to the contrary, we trust with humble Confidence, that we are upright (though, alas! attended with many Infirmities) in our Views and Labours for the Honour of Christ, and the Good of Souls; (See 2 *Cor.* i. 12) and our Consciences bear

Witness, as in the Sight of God, that we are heartily desirous and determined, through his Strengthnings, to live soberly, righteously and godly. (*Tit.* ii. 12) with a due Decorum, (καλως) suitable to our moral, religious and ministerial Characters, in all our Behaviour toward God and Man.

19 But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

19. But I more especially beg your united Prayers for my Direction and Support, under all present Trials; for Deliverance from the Dangers I am exposed to; and for the Blessing of God upon the Services I am now engaged in, that, when he has done his Work by me in these Parts, he would remove all Difficulties out of my Way, and give me a proper Opportunity of returning, and being further useful to you by my personal Ministry; and of being comforted together with you by our mutual Faith, (*Rom.* i. 12.) which I am desirous of, and hope will be hastened through your Prayers for it.

20 Now the God of Peace, that brought again from the Dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the Blood of the everlasting Covenant,

20. In the mean while, as I desire your Prayers for me, (*ver.* 18, 19.) so I am continually mindful of you in my fervent Supplications to the God of all Grace, whom I address on your Behalf, under the encouraging and endearing Consideration of him as the God of Peace, who is our reconciled God, Father and Friend; and is the Author and Giver of Peace of Conscience, and Peace one with another, and of all Manner of Prosperity in the Dispensations of Providence and Grace, till it be perfected in an everlasting Enjoyment of him; Who in the Scheme of Redemption, sustaining the Character of the Sovereign Lord, Judge and Lawgiver, to demand and receive the Satisfaction due to Divine Justice for our Sins, not only raised our Lord and Saviour from the Dead, by an Exertion of his Divine Power; (See the Note on *Rom.* viii. 11.) but, by an Act of supreme Authority, legally discharged him in a judicial Way, as our public Head and Representative; and so *took him from Prison, and from Judgment, and raised him again for our Justification.* (Is. liii. 8, and *Rom.* iv. 25.) This he did in Token of his intire Approbation and Acceptance of what Christ had done and suffered in our Room and Stead, who in his Person and Office, as a Divine Saviour, is by Way of Eminence, Dignity and Propriety, the great and only chief Shepherd of the dear chosen Flock, which the Father had given him to take effectual Care of, in the Execution of all his Offices, as a Prophet, Priest and King, that he, like a good Shepherd, who has a special Love to, and Interest in his Sheep, *might redeeem them from all Iniquity, and purify them to himself, as a peculiar People*; (Titus ii. 14.) might gather them into his Fold; and might feed, guide, govern and preserve them from all Dangers; defend them against all their Enemies; and bring them safe to Glory: All which is brought about by Means, and in Vir-

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tue of his Blood, * which he shed to make their Peace with God, who, on Account of his having done this, raised him from the Dead, and gave all Power into his Hands, that he might give eternal Life to them; he having by his precious Blood purchased them for himself, and purchased for them all the Blessings of the Covenant of Grace, and confirmed it irrevocably past Appeal: (*Chap.* ix. 15--17.) And so, in Opposition to the Mount *Sinai*-Dispensation of the Covenant, which was of a temporary Nature to *wax old, and vanish away*, (Chap. viii. 13) this is, strictly and properly speaking, an everlasting Covenant in its Constitution, and in its Benefits, which, together with the Covenant itself, shall abide for ever.

21 *Make you perfect in every good Work to do his Will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his Sight, through Jesus Christ: To whom be Glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

21. May this God of Peace set to rights all the moral Disorders of each of your Souls, and of your whole Community, and reduce them to all the Regularity of Hearts united to fear his Name, § that ye may be thoroughly prepared, fitted and disposed, and always ready and enabled for every kind of good Work, and for every Act of that Kind, relating to him, yourselves and others, to perform it in a holy, spiritual, evangelical Manner, from Principles of Faith and Love, according to the Rule of his Word, in Obedience to his Command, and for his Glory; and so may cheerfully, continually and unreservedly submit to his disposing, and obey his preceptive Will in all Things, according to the Notices he gives of both by his Providence, Word and Spirit! And as ye are insufficient for this of yourselves, May he, of his good *Pleasure, work in you both to will, and to do* every Thing, as in his Sight and Presence, that bears his own Image, and is agreeable to his holy Nature and Will, and that he observes and delights in, as the Effect of his own Grace, and as acceptable to him through the Merit and Mediation of Jesus Christ! To him, who is the great Shepherd of the Sheep, † and to the God of Peace through him, (*ver.* 20) May all possible Adoration, Ho-

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* *Through the Blood of the everlasting Covenant*, most immediately refers to God the Father's *bringing our Lord Jesus from the Dead.* But some include its Reference to Christ's being the *great Shepherd of the Sheep*; and others, to God's being the *God of Peace*, according to the current Doctrine of the Scriptures concerning him, as reconciled by the Blood of Christ; and I don't see why we may not extend its Reference to all the preceding Parts of the Verse.

§ The Word (καταρτισαι) here used, and render'd *make you perfect*, signifies to set Things to rights, and reduce them to their proper State that were out of Order, and to prepare them for a Use, which they were unfit for before. Accordingly 'tis render'd in other Places to *prepare, frame, fit, restore*, and *perfectly join together*, as in *Chap.* x. 5, and xi. 3, *A Body hast thou* PREPARED *me*, *The Worlds were* FRAMED *by the Word of God.* And the Apostle speaks of *Vessels of Wrath*, FITTED *to Destruction*, (Rom. ix. 22) of RESTORING *such as are overtaken in a Fault*, (Gal. vi. 1) and of being PERFECTLY JOINED TOGETHER *in the same Mind.* (1 Cor. i. 10.)

† It may be somewhat uncertain, whether this *Doxology* is to be referred to the *God of Peace*, who is most directly addressed in this Prayer, or to *Jesus Christ*, who is the nearest Antecedent, and with whom it stands in the closest Connection. However, as 'tis undoubtedly directed elsewhere, sometimes to the *Father*, and at others to *our Lord Jesus Christ*, it is due to both; and we may give it such a Turn, as makes it applicable to each of these divine Persons.

nour and Glory, on account of what each of these divine Persons are in themselves, have been, are, and will be to us, be ascribed henceforth continually, through all the Ages of Time, and to an endless Eternity! So it ought to be, and so we and all true Believers desire it may be, and are well assured it shall be, in Testimony of which we heartily say, *Amen.*

22 *And I beseech you, Brethren, suffer the Word of Exhortation: For I have written a Letter unto you in few Words.*

22. And now to draw to a Close, my dear Brethren, whom I love, not only as my Kindred according to the Flesh, but especially as Fellow-Christians, I earnestly beg of you that, laying aside all Prejudices, ye would take in good Part, and readily receive and comply with the Word of Exhortation and Consolation, including all the Instructions and Cautions, which I have given you in this Epistle; and that ye would not think it too long or tedious: For, though it be larger than some others of my Writing, I have summed up the Doctrines contained in it, relating to the *Mosaic* Law, and the Person, Offices and Gospel of Christ, in as short a Compass, as I well could, consistent with the vast Importance of the Things themselves, and your Concernment in them, and with my great Affection to you; as also in Comparison with the much greater Enlargement I could have gone into, had it seemed needful for you.

23 *Know ye, that* our *Brother Timothy is set at Liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you.*

23. There is one Thing further, which I with great Pleasure would acquaint you with, as I know ye would be glad to hear of it; and that is, that our dear Brother *Timothy*, who is *well reported of among you*, (Acts xvi. 2) and as a *Son with the Father, has served with me in the Gospel*, (Phil. ii. 22) is now released out of Prison, and gone upon important Affairs to another Place *; and if, according to my present Hopes, he should e'er long return to me, and I should have my Liberty, I purpose, by the Will of God, to come along with him, and give myself the Satisfaction of seeing and conversing with you, for the Furtherance of your Faith and Joy.

24 *Salute all them that have the Rule over you, and all the Saints, They of Italy salute you.*

24. In the mean while, I desire that those of you, into whose Hands this Epistle may first come, would present my most affectionate, Christian-Love and Respects to all your spiritual Guides, who are set over you in the Lord; (ηγȣμενȣς, See the Note on *ver.* 7) and to all your Fellow-Christians, who by their regular Profession are credibly believed to be

* *Timothy* it seems had been in Prison, probably with the Apostle *Paul* at *Rome*; but was by this Time released from his Bonds, and gone to some other Place, to which it is likely the Apostle had sent him, as he often did to one Place or another; as Occasions required. But as all our Times and Ways are in the Hands of the Lord; so we have no Account that can satisfy us whether *Timothy* ever returned to the Apostle, or either of them ever went to visit the *Hebrews*, tho' at the Time of writing this Epistle he had Hopes of it; and, with a due Submission to the Will of God, wrote his Design according to those Hopes. What is here said of *Timothy* confutes the *Postscript*, which was added by later Hands, and speaks of this Epistle, as *written to the* Hebrews *from* Italy, *by* Timothy.

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what, I doubt not, the Generality of them are, truly holy Persons, as having been set apart by God for himself, and sanctified by his Spirit. Those of this Character that are *Italians*, and are at present with me, join their Christian Salutations with mine.

25 *Grace* be *with you all. Amen.*

25. To conclude with my common Benediction, (See the Note on *Rom.* xvi. 22) which, for Substance, I write in all my Epistles with my own Hand, May the free Love and Favour of God through Jesus Christ, and all its blessed Manifestations, Fruits and Effects, ever attend all and every one of you, (whatsoever your Stations be in the Church, or in the World) for your Growth in Grace and in the Knowledge of Christ, and for your Direction, Preservation and Comfort here, till ye arrive at his heavenly Kingdom; with Desire and Hope of this, I say *Amen.*

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a Beauty does brotherly Love cast upon Churches and the Christian-Character! It tenderly sympathizes with, and is mindful of, compassionate and beneficent to suffering Saints, and Strangers among them; as being sensible that we ourselves are liable to like Afflictions. But how inconsistent is Covetousness with this benevolent Temper! And how unbecoming the People of God to be dissatisfied with the Disposals of Providence toward themselves! For he is their Helper, and has promised that he will not leave, nor forsake them in any State whatsoever.—As Christian-Religion sets aside no Law of Nature, What an honourable Bond is Wedlock for all, whose Age and Circumstances incline them to it, and fit them for it! But all unclean Lusts, in the single or married Life, are what God detests, and will, sooner or later, punish upon those that indulge them. But what a complete Saviour is Christ; and how stedfastly should we adhere to him! He always has been, is, and ever will be unchangeably the same in himself, and to his People; and is their great High Priest, Altar, and Sacrifice too. The Atonement he has made by his Blood is sufficient of itself to procure their Peace and Reconciliation with God, and a sacred Dedication of them, as a peculiar People to him; and is effectually all that to them, which was typified by the Sin-Offering on the great Day of Expiation, as he suffered without the Gates of *Jerusalem*, and is gone with his own Blood into Heaven itself, to appear in the Presence of God for them. What a delightful and substantial Feast has our Faith upon his Sacrifice, which they who stick to *Jewish* Institutions have no Right to eat of! How ready should we be to go out to him from every Thing that interferes with him; to renounce all the Allurements of this World for him; and cheerfully to own and honour him in all the Ignominy of his Cross! And being convinced of the uncertain, transitory State of all Things here, Let us seek a *City* of everlasting Rest and Safety in the World to come.—Of what momentous Consequence is the Ministry of Christ's faithful Servants! We should be Imitators of their Faith and holy Conversation, who have been our spiritual Guides, and finished their Course with Joy; and while Persons of this sacred Character are heartily engaged in their Work, they diligently watch for the Salvation of precious Souls; as knowing that they must give an Account of their faithful Labours, which turn greatly to their own, but most of all to their Hearers Joy or Grief, according to the good or bad Effects they have upon them. Their Counsels, Exhortations and Reproofs, as far as agreeable to the Mind and Will of Christ in his Word, ought to be seriously attended to, free from all Prejudices, and with humble Obedience and Submission to his Authority in them, that we may not be misled, and tossed to and fro, by the Errors of wicked and designing Men, who bring in various Doctrines, which are quite foreign to the Christian-Faith. O happy Souls, that are secured against their Seductions, and established in the Truth as it is in Jesus, by an Experience of its Power, and of a Work of special Grace! But as ever Ministers and People would be

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mutual Blessings and Comforts, they ought earnestly to pray one for the other. And how encouraging to Faith in Prayer is the Consideration of God in a Mediator! In this View, we may realize him as our reconciled God, and the Author of all desirable Peace and Prosperity, temporal, spiritual and eternal; may consider our Lord Jesus Christ, as the great Shepherd of the Sheep to take care of all, whom the Father has given, as a peculiar Property and Charge to him; and may think of the new and everlasting Covenant, as ratified and confirmed by his Blood, on account of which God the Father is pacified, and has raised him from the Dead, as a public Head and Representative, for their Justification. In humble Dependence upon all this, with what holy Boldness may we ask for every Grace and Favour, that we stand in need of! As particularly that God would work all our Works in and for us by his Spirit, and would enable us to offer up, with united Hearts and Lips, continual Sacrifices of Thanksgiving and Praise, and to add the most benevolent Distributions to the Necessities of others, especially of the Houshold of Faith! These also are acceptable to God thro' Jesus Christ, as Sacrifices of grateful Acknowledgment that we receive our All from him. And how cordially and affectionately should all the Saints salute one another and their spiritual Guides in a Christian-Manner! May the Grace of God in Christ be with all his Ministers and People! To whom be Glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

A PRAC-

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF THE General EPISTLE of the Apostle *JAMES*.

In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The PREFACE to the General Epistle of *JAMES*.

THIS Epistle is commonly supposed to have been wrote by that Apostle *James*, who was the Son of *Alpheus*, and stiled *James the less*, and *the Brother of our Lord*. (See the Notes on *Matth*. x. 3, and 1 *Cor*. xv. 7.) And it is called a *General* Epistle, probably, because it was wrote, not to any particular Person, or Church, but to *professing Christians* at large, though not exclusive of the *Unbelievers*, of the twelve Tribes of *Israel*, wheresoever they were dispers'd through several Countries, as appears from *Chap*. v. 1—6, and some other Places; And therefore *the Inscription* is not to Christians under any distinguishing Character of them; but only to the *Twelves Tribes* in general; nor is the *Salutation* in the usual Strain of *Grace and Peace*, or the like, but only of *Greeting*; nor is any *Benediction* added at the Close.

The *divine Authority* of this Epistle is sufficiently established in Dr. *Whitby*'s Preface to it. The *Time* of its being wrote is thought to have been about the Year of our Lord 60, when the Destruction of *Jerusalem* was approaching, in the Year 72; and its chief *Design* was to remonstrate against the *Corruption of Manners*, which had spread among that People; many of which seemed to be greatly addicted to Pride, Contention, and Worldly-mindedness, and had perverted the Gospel-Doctrine of *Justification alone by Faith in Christ*, which some of them had turn'd into Licentiousness in Practice, if not also in Principle, directly contrary to its holy Nature and Design, and utterly inconsistent with a saving Interest in its Blessings; as also to remind them of the Desolation that was coming upon them; and to comfort the Faithful among them under all the Sufferings, which they at present did, or in a little Time might, undergo from *Jewish* Infidels for the Sake of Christ, but which would soon have an End.

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The Apoſtle, after the Inſcription and Salutation, encourages true Believers to bear their Trials with Cheerfulneſs and Patience; to maintain good Thoughts of God, and diſcharge themſelves with all ſinful Effects of their Temptaions; to keep a Watch over their turbulent Paſſions; and to receive the Word of God with Meekneſs, and put it into Practice, *Chap.* i. Cautions them againſt ſhewing a partial and undue Reſpect to the Rich, and treating the Poor with Contempt and Neglect under feigned Expreſſions of Pity toward them; takes Occaſion from thence to illuſtrate that Part of his Deſign, which related to the Inſignificancy of all Profeſſions of Faith in Chriſt for Juſtification, without ſome Proof of its Sincerity by Fruitfulneſs in good Works, which he confirms by the Evidences that *Abraham* and *Rahab* gave of the Truth and prevalent Power of their Faith in Acts of holy Obedience, *Chap.* ii. Proceeds to guard them againſt reviling, cenſorious and imperious Language; ſhewing what Miſchief is done by an unruly Tongue, and how inconſiſtent an Indulgence to it is with the Chriſtian Temper and Profeſſion, and with heavenly Wiſdom, *Chap.* iii. Reproves them for their litigious, proud, worldly and envious Spirit, which marr'd and defeated their Prayers, and was contrary to God and his Law; and for their Diſregard to Providence in purſuing their ſecular Affairs, *Chap.* iv. Denounces the Judgments of God againſt thoſe of the unbelieving *Jews*, as ſoon to come upon them, who heaped up Riches to themſelves by unrighteous Gains. And then, turning again to the Chriſtian Converts, he exhorts them to wait with Patience for Deliverance from the wrath of their Enemies, who ſhould fall by approaching Calamities, and for the better Bleſſings of the World to come, without envying thoſe that were in more affluent Circumſtances of this Life, than themſelves; and eſpecially to avoid raſh and common Swearing; to behave with a ſuitable Chriſtian-Spirit in Proſperity and Adverſity; to acknowledge their Faults to, and offer ſuch Prayers for, one another, as God will hear and anſwer; and to do what in them lay, for the Converſion of thoſe that had lived in erroneous and ſinful Courſes, contrary to the Truth and Holineſs of the Goſpel, *Chap.* v.

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CHAP.

CHAP. I.

The Apostle prefaces his Epistle with a general Salutation of the Jews *in their Dispersion,* 1. *Addresses himself, first of all, to the Christian-Converts among them, directing them how to make a due Improvement of their Troubles, how to apply to God under them, and how to behave in prosperous and adverse Circumstances,* 2—12. *Warns them, not to impute to God any Temptations to Sin; but to look upon all Evil as proceeding from themselves, and all Good from God,* 13—18. *Infers the Duties of watching against a rash and furious Temper, and of receiving the Word of God with Meekness, and living according to it,* 19—25. *And shews the Difference between vain Pretences, and real Religion,* 26, 27.

TEXT.	PARAPHRASE.
1 JAMES *a Servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the Twelve Tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.*	1. JAMES, who is, and counts it a high Honour to be, a ministring Servant of the God of *Israel*, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God, and the only Mediator between God and Man, * sends this Epistle, by divine Authority, to all and every one of the twelve Tribes of *Israel*, (*Acts* xxvi. 7.) especially the Professors of Christianity among them, into whose Hands it may come, in what Nation soever they be dispersed, whether by former Captivities, or by later Severities; and he heartily wishes them all Manner of Blessings, relating to this World, and that which is to come.
2 *My Brethren, count it all Joy when ye fall into divers Temptations;*	2. As to those of you, my dear Brethren, who are so, not only after the Flesh, but in a spiritual Relation, and who, for your Profession of Faith in Christ, suffer many Troubles of various Kinds, which ye do not make to yourselves by your own Guilt and Folly; but are cast into by the unrighteous Violence of wicked Men, under the infinitely wise Permission and sovereign Disposals of the holy God, who graciously orders and over-rules them by his Providence, and sanctifies them by his Spirit, for the Trial and Improvement of your Faith; (*ver.* 3. and 1 *Pet.* i. 7.) Be not ye discouraged at them; but rather esteem it your Honour, and Matter of the greatest spiritual Rejoicing, that ye *are counted worthy to suffer Shame*, and other Hardships, *for his Name*; (Acts v. 31.) and so to bear a noble Testimony to him, for his Glory, and the Advantage of your own, as well as others Souls;
3 *Knowing* this, *that the trying of your*	3. As being fully perswaded in your own Minds, upon the foot of divine Revelation, and having an Experience in

* *A Servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ* (Θεου και κυριου Ιησου Χριστου δουλος) may be translated *a Servant of God even of the Lord Jesus Christ*, as no Article follows (και) *and* in the *Greek*. (See the Note on *Tit.* ii. 13.)

Faith worketh Patience.

yourselves, that they are designed of God for the trying, proving, and rendering approved, * the Truth and Efficacy of your Faith in Christ, and Constancy in the Profession of it, as what will stand the Test; and that every such Trial of your Faith has a powerful Influence, through the concurring Operation of the Spirit, (1 *Pet.* iv. 14) to produce and improve a calm Submission, and persevering Resignation to the sovereign Will, and holy Providence of God in the most afflictive Dispensations, which in a special Manner minister Occasions, and call for, and inure the Soul unto the Exercise of Patience, without murmuring at his Hand in them, or being enraged against the Instruments of them.

4. But let Patience have her perfect Work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

4. But, as ever ye would reap this happy Fruit of your Trials, Let Patience take its own proper Course, without Check or Disturbance from your sinful Passions; and give full Scope to its genuine Exercises, as consisting of a meek and humble, composed, resigned and cheerful Frame of Spirit; and *that* not only in the first Onsets of one and another Trouble, but with Perseverance, under every Variety and Continuance of them, all your Days, to the End that (ἵνα) ye may be complete Christians, (See the Note on 1 *Cor.* ii. 6.) and arrive at the greatest Eminence in this, together with every other Grace; and so may not be deficient in any Thing that belongs to the Christian-State and Character, or that is necessary to your holding on, and holding out to the End, and finishing your Course with Joy, which shall issue in a perfect Freedom from all Sin and Sorrow, and in the complete Holiness and Happiness of the heavenly State.

5 If any of you lack Wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all Men *liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.*

5. In order to the attaining of this, If any of you, amidst all your Straits and Difficulties, (λείπεται) is destitute of spiritual Wisdom, (as the best of us all, more or less, certainly are) to direct him in every Case, and particularly how to judge of his Afflictions, how to behave in a becoming Manner under them, and how to make a suitable Use and Improvement of them, as may be most for the divine Glory, and his own Soul's Advantage; Let such an one, under a humbling Sense of his own Weakness and Folly, and of the Insufficiency of any Creature whatsoever to conduct him in a right Way, apply with earnest Application and Prayer, through Jesus Christ, to the God of all Light and Grace, for the Leadings and Guidance of his Word, Providence and Spirit, who is readier to give, than we are

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* The Word (δοκίμιον) here rendered the *trying* of your Faith, signifies *that, by which* our Faith is tried, and proved unto Approbation, as pure and genuine, in Allusion to the trying of Metals by a Fire; and is a different Word from that which is used in *Rom.* v. 4, where the Apostle says, Tribulation works Patience, and Patience *Experience*, (δοκιμὴν) which signifies *the Effect* of the trying; and so that, which tries our Faith, works Patience in its Fruits and Effects; and the Patience, that is tried and proved, works the happiest Experience. (See the Paraphrase on *Rom.* v. 4.)

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to ask, needful Blessings of him; who bountifully distributes them with a free and open Heart and Hand to all Sorts of Men, and particularly to all that sincerely and in a right Manner ask them of him; and who is so rich in Mercy, and of so great Kindness, as not to reproach humble Supplicants, or twit them with their Ignorance, Folly and Unworthiness, or with the many Favours which he has already bestowed upon them, and they have misimproved; nor will he disdain to hear and answer their Petitions, how often soever they solicit him for still farther Supplies; And he will graciously afford all seasonable Counsel and Assistances, that are needful for such a praying Christian. (*See Prov.* ii. 5, 6.)

6 But let him ask in Faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a Wave of the Sea, driven with the Wind, and tossed.

6. But it is not his merely pouring out Words, or uttering a Prayer before the Lord, that will meet with this gracious Answer; No, If he would succeed in his Suit, it is to be presented with a firm Dependence on Christ, and on the Wisdom, Power, Faithfulness and Goodness of God in him, for a Performance of his Promises, without any Staggering at them through Unbelief: (*Rom* iv. 20.) For he that gives Way to Distrusts, Questionings and sinful Jealousies, whether God can, or will perform his gracious Promises, is as unsteady and restless in Principle and Practice, as a Wave of the Sea, which sometimes swells upwards; and then sinks downwards, and is driven one Way and another, backwards and forwards, in a tumultuous Manner by a stormy Wind.

7 For let not that Man think that he shall receive any Thing of the Lord.

7. Let not therefore any Man of such a diffident and fluctuating Spirit, which dishonours, instead of giving Glory to God, flatter himself as though his unstable and unbelieving Prayer shall be answered, or that he shall receive the Wisdom, or any good Thing, which he asks of the Lord, in Accomplishment of Promises that belong only to true Believers.

8 A double-minded Man is *unstable in all his Ways.*

8. A Man of a *double Heart*, (Ps. xii. 2.) that is divided between Hope and Despondency, or between God and corrupt Affections to the World, inclining now one Way, and then another, like those that halted between two Opinions about *God* and *Baal*; (1 Kings, xviii. 21.) or he, who would fain *serve* both God and Mammon (*Matth.* vi. 24.) is unsettled in Religion, and continually hesitating, fickle and perplexed in all his Thoughts, Words and Actions about it; and so brings nothing to pass, nor can expect to speed in his Prayers.

9 Let the Brother of low Degree rejoice in that he is exalted:

9. But, to return to what has been said about rejoicing in Trials, (*ver.* 2.) Any Brother in Christ that has a fixed Faith in him, and in the Power and Grace of God through him, may warrantably plead and fairly rely on every Promise of his Covenant. Upon this Consideration, let him that is poor in outward Circumstances, and oppressed by Persecutions, and is of a lowly Spirit, suitable to such an afflicted Condition, glory (καυχάσθω) in the Thought, that he

he is highly advanced to all the spiritual Riches of Faith, as an Heir of the Kingdom of Heaven, (*Chap.* ii. 5.) and to the Honour of those Believers, to whom *it is given on the Behalf of Christ to suffer for his Sake*, and *upon whom the Spirit of Glory and of God resteth.* (*Phil.* i. 29, and 1 *Pet.* iv. 14.)

10 *But the rich in that he is made low: because as the Flower of the Grass he shall pass away.*

10. And, on the other Hand, as to any Christian-Brother, who, amidst all his Affluence, is brought to have low Thoughts of himself, and of all his earthly Enjoyments, as mean, precarious and perishing, and to be willing to give them all up for Christ; or who, having had Abundance of the Possessions of this Life, is now reduced to Poverty for the Sake of his holy Profession, and is of an humble Spirit, Let him rejoice in the happy Exchange of temporal Wealth and Prosperity for the incomparably better and everlasting Riches of Grace and Glory; because, supposing that he were not to be deprived of his worldly Enjoyments while he lives, he must soon die away from them; and then all his flourishing State in them will perish with him, like the fading Flower of the Field. (*Isa.* xl. 6, 7.)

11 *For the Sun is* no sooner *risen with a burning Heat,* but *it withereth the Grass, and the Flower thereof falleth, and the Grace of the Fashion of it perisheth: So also shall the rich Man fade away in his Ways.*

11. For as the Sun in the Firmament no sooner rises in the full Strength of its scorching Heat, like that which beat upon the Head of *Jonah*, and was attended with *a vehement East Wind*, (Jon. iv. 8.) but it immediately causes the flourishing Grass, or verdant Stem to wither; and its beautiful Flower sickens, droops and dies; and all the Glory of its lively, gay and florid Appearance is destroyed: So the Man of Wealth and Grandeur, that has no better Portion than the splendid and pleasing Enjoyments of this present Life, shall pine away in his Iniquity, and be cut off, by one or another Providence, in the Midst of all his Schemes and Designs for this World, and of all his Prosperity and Honour.

12 *Blessed* is *the Man that endureth Temptation: For when he is tried, he shall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*

12. Happy, inexpressibly happy, is the Man who is called, and has Wisdom and Grace to enable him, in a Christian-Manner, to bear the greatest Tribulation, even to the Loss of all Things here for Christ: For when he has passed thro' the Trial, and is (δοκιμος) approved of God, as having endured it with Faith and Patience, humble Submission and holy Fortitude, and stood the Proof, he shall come off a Conqueror; and, in Opposition to the Garland of fading Herbs and Flowers, which Victors were crowned with in the *Grecian*-Games, shall receive the immortal and incorruptible Crown of all heavenly Life, Blessedness and Glory; which the Lord Jesus, the great Judge of all, and God the Father on his Account, has freely promised, and will certainly give at the last Day, to all those, who, from a Principle of Faith in Christ, supremely desire, esteem and delight in him, and look and long for his appearing in all his Glory to their complete Salvation. (*Heb.* ix. 28.) They therefore may well rejoice in all Tribulations for his Sake.

13. If

13 *Let no Man ſay when he is tempted, I am tempted of God. For God cannot be tempted with Evil, neither tempteth he any Man.*

13. If then any Profeſſor of his Name, inſtead of improving in Grace and Holineſs, ſhou'd fall into impatient Murmurings, Diſtruſt of God, and Apoſtacy, or any other Sin, by Means of the Afflictions that befel him, and are ſuited, deſigned and bleſſed, for the Good of ſuch as make a proper Uſe of them, Let him not dare to think, or ſay, that when he is thus tried, and it becomes an Occaſion of Sin to him, God, whoſe Providence ordered thoſe Trials, drew him into Sin by them. It is ſhocking Impiety to bring any ſuch Charge againſt him: For God is ſo infinitely pure and holy in his Nature and Will, Deſigns and Operations, that it is abſolutely impoſſible for him to be prevailed upon by any Occurrence from without, or any Motion within himſelf, to do the leaſt Iniquity; nor can he, conſiſtent with his own abſolute Perfection, entice or perſwade, much leſs inwardly influence, and much leſs ſtill ever neceſſitate, any one to commit the leaſt Moral Evil, * which he utterly abhors. (*Habac.* i. 13.)

14 *But every Man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own Luſt, and enticed.*

14. But the true and proper Cauſe of any Man's being induced by outward Afflictions to revolt from God, or Sin againſt him, lies not in thoſe Diſpenſations of Providence, but in himſelf. Whenever they have ſuch a malignant Effect upon him, it is owing to his own corrupt Heart and wicked Inclinations, which violently drag him off (ἐξελκόμενος) from the Way of Truth and Holineſs, and from a Profeſſion of Chriſt's Name, and which (δελεαζόμενος) beguile and delude him into Sin and Apoſtacy under ſome ſpecious deceitful Appearances of carnal Eaſe and Pleaſure, or worldly Advantage that he propoſes to himſelf by it, as a Fiſh is caught and drawn out of the Water by the Hook, that is covered with a tempting Bait.

15 *Then when Luſt hath conceived, it bringeth forth Sin: and Sin, when it is finiſhed, bringeth forth Death.*

15. It is then, and then only, when the evil Propenſion in the Thoughts of a Man's own Heart, which is itſelf Sin in *Embrio*, (*Prov.* xxiv. 9.) has gained the Approbation and free Conſent of the Will, that it produces *actual* Sin, as the genuine Fruit of its own depraved Inclination; and actual Sin, when it is completed, allow'd of, perſiſted in and indulged with Impenitence and Unbelief, not only renders him obnoxious to, but will certainly iſſue in everlaſting Miſery, as its proper Fruit and Wages, (*Rom.* v. 21, 23. See the Note there) which is the ſecond Death; and ſo his Deſtruction is, and will be of himſelf.

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* The *Evil* here ſpoken of is undoubtedly *Moral Evil*, or the Evil of *Sin*, as it is determinately explained in the two next Verſes. But the Evil of *Affliction* or *Puniſhment* is quite a different Thing, with reſpect to which God ſays, *I make Peace and create Evil; and ſhall there be Evil in the City, and the Lord has not done it?* (Iſa. xlv. 7, and Amos. iii. 6.) And yet as he inflicts even this ſort of Evil, only on Account of Sin, which has deſerved it; we in the *Moral View* may be ſaid to be the Cauſe of it, rather than God, who *delights in Mercy*, and counts Judgments *his ſtrange Work*; and ſaid of *Iſrael*, that they had *fallen by their Iniquity*, and *deſtroyed themſelves.*

16. Take

16 *Do not err, my beloved Brethren.*

16. Take heed then, my dear Brethren, (μη πλανασθε) lest any of you run astray from the Truth of the Gospel, and wander into such abominably erroneous, blasphemous and injurious Conceptions of the holy and blessed God, or of his Ways, as to imagine that he is or can be the Author of Sin, or doth any Thing to encourage or promote it.

17 *Every good Gift, and every perfect Gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no Variableness, neither Shadow of Turning.*

17. On the contrary, He is so infinitely far from this, that every good Thing we enjoy, relating to this World and that which is to come; every Bounty of Providence, and intellectual Endowment, and every Gift of a spiritual and holy Kind, which has no Mixture of Sin in it, but tends to the perfecting of our Nature and Happiness; all, and nothing but, Good in the natural, moral and spiritual World, is originally and effectively from God, *whose Throne is in the Heavens, and whose Kingdom rules over all*; (Ps. ciii. 19.) and it descends from on high, and is communicated to us from him, who is himself *Light, without any Darkness at all*; (1 John i. 5.) and is the Fountain, Author and Giver of all Sorts of Light, rational and religious, as well as corporal, of all the Light of Knowledge, Holiness and Happiness, Grace and Glory; and who is unchangeably the same in himself and in his Will and Purposes, (*Mal.* iii. 6.) without the least Alteration, * or any Mixture of Shade, by turning from moral Good to Evil, in his own Nature, or in any of his Thoughts or Dispensations: We may therefore be sure that no unrighteous Evil, but all Good comes from him.

18 *Of his own Will begat he us with the Word of Truth, that we should be a kind of First-Fruits of his Creatures.*

18. We, who believe, have a most eminent and endearing Demonstration, that the best of all Blessings derive from him; as it is not from any Wisdom, or Power, Worthiness, or Merit in us, but merely of his own good Will, and sovereign Pleasure, *according to his abundant Mercy*, that he has regenerated and begotten us to a lively Hope of an everlasting Inheritance, (*Joh.* i. 13. 1 *Pet.* i. 3, 4.) by means of the Gospel, which is his true and faithful

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* *With whom is no Variableness* (παρ' ῳ ουκ ενι παραλλαγη) seems to allude to the *Parallaxes* or Changes of the *Sun*, which appear different in the *East*, in its *Meridian* Height, and in the *West*: And *neither Shadow of Turning* (η τροπης αποσκιασμα) seems to allude to Departures of the Sun from us between the *Tropicks*, that cast different Shades. But there is no Variation in the Nature, or Will of God, who is always the same, and whose Dispensations, how various soever, are all *according to the Counsel of his own Will*. (Eph. i. 11.) And there is no Inconsistency in *this* with those Passages, that speak of his *repenting* of any Good, or Evil, which he by his Word, or Providence, or both, seemed to have intended to perform: For they relate, not to any Alteration in the Mind or Decree of God himself, but only in his external Methods of Proceedure, when they are such as Men use to make upon any Change in their own Purposes: But as God infallibly foreknew all Events from Eternity, he always invariably determined to alter his various Dispensations, as he knew the Circumstances of Things would make it fit for him so to do. To suppose the contrary would argue a most unsufferable self-subversive Imperfection in the almighty, infinitely wise and blessed God, and in the Certainty and Steadiness of his Views and Designs, as the great Governor of the World.

Word,

Word, and is rendered efficacious, in the Hand of the Spirit, for producing the new Birth, and all the Holiness and Happiness that ensue upon it. (See *Joh.* xvii. 17, 1 *Cor.* iv. 15, and 1 *Pet.* i. 23.) And he has done this for us, that we, like the First-Fruits under the Law, might be consecrated to him, as his peculiar Property, and the most excellent Kind of all his Creatures; and as the Pledge and Earnest of his gathering in a Harvest of Souls to himself, from among *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, by a new Creation of them in *Christ Jesus unto good Works*, (Eph. ii. 10.) in which he first began with us, the converted *Jews*.

19 *Wherefore my beloved Brethren, let every Man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.*

19. Therefore my dear Christian-Brethren, let every one of you, suitable to his Character and Obligations, as a new Creature, be ready to hear, and attend to what God says in his Word, about himself, and about the great and good Things, that he has done, and promised to do for his People: Let not such an one dare to speak reproachfully of God, or of his Ways of Providence and Grace; nor be rash and hasty in setting up for a Preacher, or in giving his Sense of difficult Texts of Scripture before he has well considered them: And, as ever he wou'd not speak unadvisedly with his Lips, let him keep a Curb upon his Passions, and take heed of an angry wrathful Temper in disputing for, or against Points of Controversy; or in treating any Person with haughty Contempt and Severity, that differs from him. †

20 *For the Wrath of Man worketh not the Righteousness of God.*

20. For the unguarded Heat and intemperate Fury of a Man's own Passions, which, whatever be pretended, proceed from Pride, Selfishness and Impatience of Contradiction, and not from a regular and sacred Zeal, are far from serving God's righteous Cause, which needs no such unhallowed Methods to support it; and are far from recommending to others his Way of Righteousness by Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Gospel; (*Rom.* i. 17.) or the the Practice of Righteousness, which God enjoins and approves: (1 *Cor.* xv. 34, and *Psa.* xi. 7.) They, on the contrary, cloud and hurry a Man's own Thoughts, and render him incapable of speaking aright for God; and at the same Time prejudice the Minds of others against all that he offers to bring them over unto Righteousness.

† The *three Directions* contained in this Verse may very well be considered as *general Rules* of Conduct in the ordinary Course of our Lives and Conversation, that we should be more swift to hear than to speak, and should keep a Guard upon our Passions. But as this Verse is an *Inference* from the foregoing Discourse; and as the good and bad Use of the Tongue, and Regulation of the Passions are handled distinctly and at large in *Chap.* iii, I rather think that the Apostle intended all these Exhortations in some such peculiar Reference to what he had just before been speaking of, as is suggested in the Paraphrase. (Vid. *Zanch.* in loc.)

21 Wherefore lay apart all Filthiness, and Superfluity of Naughtiness, and receive with Meekness the ingrafted Word, which is able to save your Souls.

21. Labour therefore to cast away, with Abhorrence, all those corrupt Affections, which defile the Soul, saying to them, *Get ye hence*, (Isa. xxx. 22) and all the Over-flowings of Malice, (περισσειαν κακιας) which are excessively evil, and are like the luxuriant Branches of a Tree, which suck away the Sap that should make it fruitful; And, having abandon'd these, Let it be your great Concern that, with all Humility, Modesty, and Submission of your Understandings and Hearts, Consciences and Affections to the Authority of God in his Word, ye may cordially embrace it with Faith and Love, and it may be set, like a good and fruitful Graft, into your very Souls, as vitally united with them, and turning all their Dispositions and Productions into its own holy Likeness, which is completely sufficient to shew you the Way of Salvation; and when received into the Heart by Faith, and attended with the Power of the Spirit, is wonderfully efficacious to nourish your immortal Souls with saving Virtue, and bring them into a Possession of all heavenly Happiness, which consists in a Deliverance from Sin and Misery, and in an Enjoyment of, and Conformity to, the blessed God in all his Glory for ever.

22 But be ye Doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

22. But that it may have this happy Effect upon you, See that its Influence be so powerful in your Hearts, as to engage you to put its excellent and holy Principles into Practice in your Lives; and that ye content not yourselves with barely giving it the hearing, and assenting to it, to fill your Heads with Notions of the Gospel, as if this were all that is necessary to Salvation; which wou'd be to delude your own Souls by fallacious Reasonings, (παραλογιζομενοι εαυτους) and putting the worst of all Cheats upon yourselves, in Matters of the highest and everlasting Consequence.

23 For if any be a Hearer of the Word, and not a Doer, he is like unto a Man beholding his natural Face in a Glass:

23. For, let Peoples Pretences be what they will, If any one be only a Hearer of the Word of God, and don't receive it with Faith and Love, so as to regulate his Dealings with God, and Conversation in the World, according to it, he is like *a Man*, (ανδρι) who, being ordinarilly less curious than Women about Cleanliness and Dress, cursorily looks at the Image of his own human Face in a Mirrour or Looking Glass; and when he goes away thinks no more of it, nor takes any Care to wipe off the Spots or Dirt upon it. Just so it is with the careless and unprofitable Hearer: When he comes to attend on the Preaching of the Word of God, which may fitly be compared to a Looking-Glass, as it plainly discovers what a Man is in himself, according to the Law, and what he may hope to be in Christ according to the Gospel, (2 *Cor.* iii. 18.) he has some Notions and Convictions of his own Guilt, Depravity and Danger, and of his need of a Savi-

our, and of a thorough Change in Heart and Life; but proceeds no further.

24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his Way, and straightway forgetteth what Manner of Man he was.

24. For, having taken only a slight and transient View of himself, without any deep and abiding Impressions upon his Heart, he goes away, like the Man who beheld his natural Face in a Glass; and through the Cares, or Riches, or Pleasures of this Life, (*Luke* viii. 14.) immediately lays aside all Thoughts or Concern about what he saw of his own Sin and Misery, and Want of pardoning and renewing Grace, while he sat under the Word; and so goes on in Impenitence and Unbelief, and in a sinful Course of Life, just as before.

25 But whoso looketh into the perfect Law of Liberty, and continueth therein, *he being not a forgetful Hearer, but a Doer of the Work, this Man shall be blessed in his Deed.*

25. But (ὁ δὲ παρακύψας) he who, in Opposition to a slight and transient View, (*ver.* 23, 24.) accurately and intently looks into the Glass of the Gospel-Revelation,* which is a complete Doctrine of spiritual Liberty to true Believers, for their Deliverance from the ceremonial Yoke of Bondage, and the servile Spirit of the *Mosaic* Dispensation, and from the Guilt and Power of Sin, the Curse of the Law, the Wrath of God and eternal Misery, and for their serving him with holy Freedom and Delight; and he who continues in the Faith and Practice of the Things contained therein, and so is not careless and unmindful of what he heard, or of what he saw himself to be in that Glass, but lives in the Exercise of every Grace, and in the Discharge of every Duty answerable to it: This Man is happy indeed, though not for, yet in his Work of Faith and Labour of Love, and in the very keeping of God's Commands; (*Ps.* xix. 11.) and as his *Fruit is unto Holiness, the End shall be everlasting Life.* (Rom. vi. 22.)

26 If any Man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his Tongue, but deceiveth his own Heart, this Man's Religion is *vain.*

26. Upon the whole then, If any one among you pretends to be a Worshipper of God, (θρησκὸς εἶναι) or makes a great Show of Religion and talks abundantly of it, that he may pass for a pious Man; and yet, at the same Time, don't restrain and govern his Tongue, as a furious headstrong Horse is check'd and curb'd by the Bridle; but gives himself Leave to use profane and abusive Language, or to rail against, revile, censure and reproach his Brother, flattering himself with a vain Conceit, as though a Zeal for God would justify all the injurious and bitter Words, which in reality proceed from the Pride and Passion of his own deceived Heart; all this Man's Religion, whatever he or others may think of it, is an empty insignificant Thing, (*ver.* 20.) which will never do him any Good, as one that is blessed in his Deed. (*ver.* 25.)

* By *the perfect Law of Liberty* seems to be meant *the Doctrine of the Gospel,* which was spoken of in the preceding Context, and in a lax Sense of the Word is here stiled *a Law,* as in *Rom.* iii. 27. (See the Note there.) For the *Mosaic* Law, in every View of it, is always represented in the New Testament, as *a Law of Servitude,* in Opposition to the Gospel; and never as *a Law of Liberty.* (Vid. *Par.* in loc.)

27 *Pure Religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the Fatherless and Widows in their Affliction,* and *to keep himself unspotted from the World.*

27. In Opposition to all these false and hypocritical Appearances, The Religion of the Gospel, that is truly sincere and uncorrupted, without Mixture of human Inventions, or of carnal Principles, Motives and Ends to defile it, and is exercised, as in the Sight and Presence of God, even the Father, according to his Will and Word, with a Desire of pleasing him, rather than Men; the Religion that is approved and accepted of God in Christ, is *this,* It disposes and engages the Christian to be tender, kind and compassionate to the Needy and Distressed, especially of the Houshold of Faith, (*Gal.* vi. 10.) in doing what he can for their Relief and Comfort, with all the Condescension and Friendship that are manifested in readily visiting and assisting poor fatherless Children, and destitute Widows, who of all others need a helping Hand; and, by its powerful Influence upon him, he is enabled to behave in such a circumspect and holy Manner, as to keep clear of the Pollutions of this evil and ensnaring World, that he may not defile himself, or bring a Slur upon his Conscience, Hopes, or Character, by *the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, or the Pride of Life.* (1 John ii. 16.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

Blessed be God! who takes Care of his scatter'd Ones, wheresoever they are. Though their Tribulations for his Name's sake may be great; yet they may rejoice in them, as over-ruled and sanctified for the Trial and Improvement of their Faith and Patience, and the perfecting of his good Work in them, who shall receive the Crown of Life, which he has promised to those that love him. What is all this World, which fades and perishes like the Flower of the Field by the scorching Heat of the Sun, compared with the exalted and immortal Blessings that belong to the humble Christian of the lowest Degree? But, O what spiritual Wisdom do the Children of God need to enable them to behave, as becomes them under their various Trials! And what solid Grounds have they to ask it in Faith! The Father of Lights will give it to them; and not upbraid, but liberally supply Persons of all Characters and Conditions with such good Things, as they pray for in Faith; while others defeat their own Prayers by distrusting his Power, Faithfulness and Grace, and by fluctuating in Religion like a Wave of the Sea. But if any are drawn into Sin and Apostacy, by Means of the Temptations they meet with, How monstrously impious and shocking is it to father their Sin upon God, as though he were the Cause of it! All Good, and no moral Evil comes from him, who dwells on high; and who, in the mere sovereign Pleasure of his own gracious Will, forms his People for himself by his regenerating Spirit, and the Instrumentality of his Word, that they may be an excellent Kind of Creatures to shew forth his Praise; and such is the absolute Unchangeableness of his holy Nature and Will, that he can neither be induced to do any Iniquity himself, nor to abet or encourage it in others. But whosoever commits Sin, it is all owing to the corrupt Inclinations of his own Heart, which, having once gained the free Consent of the Will, produces actual Sin; and this, persisted in, brings forth its proper Wages in Death and Ruin; and so he destroys himself.—How watchful should we be against Pride and Passion, hard Thoughts of God, and an assuming Temper, that is more ready to speak, than to hear! And with what Humility, Reverence and Submission to the Authority of God in his Word, should we receive it, that, by the Concurrence of his Spirit, it may become an engrafted Word to the saving of our Souls; and that we may not only be Hearers, but hearty Believers and conscientious Observers and Doers of all that it says to us! Without practical Godliness, all a Man's Thoughts about his own State and Condition, that have at any Time been presented to his View in the Glass of God's Word, are soon forgotten, and leave him just where they found him, impenitent, unbelieving and unreformed. But he who has a clear and transforming In-

sight, by divine Illumination, into the Gospel, which is a perfect System of the noblest Liberty to true Believers, is such a Hearer of the Word, as is blessed in his Way and Work, and shall be so at the End of them. O how seriously concerned should we be, not to deceive our own Souls in an Affair of such vast and eternal Consequence! If we are under the Dominion of a severely censorious and unruly Spirit and Tongue, whatever our Pretences to Religion be, we may depend upon it, that they are all hypocritical, empty and vain. But if we have that Faith, which works by Love and Compassion to the Poor, the destitute Widow and Fatherless, and which purifies the Heart, and fortifies us against the Temptations of the World. This is sincere and uncorrupted Religion in God's Account, and he will own it.

CHAP. II.

The Apostle goes on to shew that all Notions and Professions of Faith are vain, if not productive of impartial Love and Justice to others, the Poor as well as the Rich, 1—13. *And strongly argues from the Nature of Things, (illustrated by fruitless Pretences of Pity to the Poor, and by a Body without a Soul) and from the Instances of* Abraham *and* Rahab, *the Necessity of Good Works to prove the Sincerity of Faith, which otherwise is dead, and will be of no more Advantage, than the Faith of Devils,* 14—26.

TEXT.

1 MY *Brethren, have not the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ,* the Lord *of Glory, with respect of Persons.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. THAT your Religion, my professing Christian-Brethren, may prove to be of that Kind, which is *pure and undefiled,* (Chap. i. 27.) Take heed of entertaining mere Notions of Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, who is in himself a gloriously divine Person, and the Purchaser and Giver of heavenly Glory; and is to be embraced as glorified, after his Sufferings and Death, by a lively Faith in him; and beware of taking up with such empty Professions of his glorious Name, and presumptuous Dependencies on him for eternal Life, as leave you under the Power of a partial, unjust and carnal Acceptation of Persons, (προσωποληψίαις) * not according to their religious Characters, and the Merits of their Cause, but according to their higher or lower Circumstances in this Life.

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* *With Respect of Persons* is not to be understood as designed to discountenance paying *civil Respect,* in a decent Manner, to Persons of superior Rank and Station, which would be to contradict the Apostle *Paul's* Order, (*Rom.* xiii. 7.) to *render Honour to whom Honour is due,* by Virtue of their civil Character: But it rather relates to partial Respects being shewn in *civil and ecclesiastical Proceedings,* merely on account of one Person's being richer and finer dressed than another: For in the next Verse the Apostle speaks of one and the other's coming into the *Assembly* or *Synagogue,* (εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν) which was used for civil and ecclesiastical Judicature, as well as for religious Worship: And then he goes on, (*ver.* 3—9.) to speak of *sitting at the Footstool,* in Allusion to the Custom of placing Persons of lower Rank there in their Judicatories; and speaks of *Judges* and *Judgment-Seats,* and of Persons acting partially, as *Transgressors of the Law,* which seems to refer to the Law *about impartial Judgment,* without Respect to the Rich or Poor, *Lev.* xix. 15, and *Deut.* i. 17. (See Dr. *Hammond's* and *Whitby's* Notes here) And so this is no Way inconsistent with that becoming Deference to Persons of superior Rank and Character, which our blessed Lord recommends in common Conversation and Behaviour, *Luke* xiv. 8—10.

2. For

2 For if there come unto your Assembly a Man with a gold Ring, in goodly Apparel, and there come in also a poor Man, in vile Raiment;

2. For if, at any Time, there come into your Synagogue, or Place of assembling, as for religious Worship, so for judging and determining ecclesiastical and civil Causes, (See the Note on *ver.* 1.) one Man that makes a Figure and is deck'd with rich and splendid Ornaments, such as a gold Ring on his Finger and sumptuous Raiment; and another comes into the same Assembly or Court, that is in mean Circumstances, and makes a despicable Appearance in a course or ragged Dress;

3 And ye have Respect to him that weareth the gay Clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good Place; and say unto the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my Footstool:

3. And if, in this Case, ye shew Abundance of Respect and Deference to him that glitters in fine and gaudy Cloaths; and, for that Reason only, take great Care to ingratiate yourselves with him, and to decide every Thing in his Favour, and in Token thereof invite him to the most honourable Seat, saying, Pray, Sir, please to take your Place here; and at the same Time treat the Man of low Circumstances with Scorn, and with a Contempt of him and his Cause, saying, Stand you at a Distance; or, if you would sit, it must be at no better Place than my Footstool:

4 Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become Judges of evil Thoughts?

4. Is not this scandalous Difference, which ye make between the Rich and the Poor, a plain Evidence of an unjustifiable Partiality in your Temper and Conduct towards one, rather than the other? And do ye not, in reality, pass such a Judgment about them severally, as proceeds from carnal, wrong and bias's'd Ways of thinking concerning them, only according to outward Appearance?

5 Hearken, my beloved Brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this World rich in Faith, and Heirs of the Kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

5. To guard you against, and cure you of this Evil, Pray, my dear Brethren whom I trust God loves, consider how contrary this Opinion and Proceeding of yours is to his Thoughts and Ways in Things that relate to Religion and Salvation; Has not the great and blessed God, in the exceeding Riches of his Grace, from all Eternity chosen (*Eph.* i. 4.) mostly Persons of lower Circumstances among Mankind to Faith and Holiness here, and to complete Salvation hereafter? (2 *Thess.* ii. 13.) And has he not shewn, in the Dispensations of his sovereign Mercy, that he has peculiarly made Choice of such, to be Partakers of much more excellent Riches, through Faith in his Son, and thro' lively Exercises of it, than can be found in this World; and to be intitled to, and brought to the Possession of an Inheritance of all the Blessings of that Kingdom of Grace here, and of Glory hereafter, which he has made over, in the Promises of the New Covenant, to those that desire, Esteem and Delight in him above all Creature-Enjoyments?

6 But ye have despised the Poor. Do not rich Men oppress you, and draw you before the Judgment-Seats?

6. But while ye, on the contrary, have treated your poor Christian-Brethren with Neglect and Disregard, ye have dishonoured and poured Contempt upon those, whom God loves, and has put the highest Honour upon; and paid your chief Respects to such as he despises, and as ye have no Cause to caress. For what Sort of Treatment do ye meet with from them? Is it not the Custom of the great

and rich Man of this World to deal very injuriously by you? Do not the Generality of them, through Pride and Insolence, and Enmity to Christ and his Ways, set themselves against you, and (καταδυναστευουσιν υμων) exercise a cruel Tyranny over you for his Sake; and drag you into Courts of Judicature to sit in Judgment upon you, and to condemn, fine and imprison you, and put some of your Fellow Christians to Death, on account of their Profession of the Gospel?

7 Do not they blaspheme that worthy Name, by the which ye are called?

7. Do they not belch out the most horrid Reproaches and Blasphemies upon that glorious Name, on which ye call, and by which ye are denominated *Christians*, and distinguished as related to Christ? Is it not thus with the great Men among both *Jews* and *Gentiles*?

8 If ye fulfil the royal Law, according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself, ye do well:

8. If, instead of paying extravagant Honours to Men of Rank and Condition in the World, because of their Riches, and despising the Poor, because of their Poverty, ye were impartially to attend to, and fulfil all the Duties of the great Law of Love; which may be called *the Royal Law*, as it is a most excellent Law, formerly enacted by the King of *Israel* under the Old Testament-Dispensation; (*Lev.* xix. 18) and as Christ, the King of the New Testament-Church, has established, recommended and enforced it upon all his Disciples by new and evangelical Motives; (*Matth.* xxii. 39, and *John* xiii. 34, 35) the Purport of which is, You shall treat all your Fellow Creatures, and especially your religious Brethren, with as much Benevolence, Justice and Mercy, according to their various Circumstances, as you would think right and reasonable, and would expect in like Cases to be treated yourself. If, I say, ye thus behave towards all Ranks and Degrees of Mankind, and particularly of your Brethren in the Lord, from a Principle of Love, and in Obedience to the Command of Christ, your Lord and King, ye act an honourable Part (καλως) becoming your Christian-Character.

9 But if ye have Respect to Persons, ye commit Sin, and are convinced of the Law as Transgressors.

9. But if, on the other Hand, ye make partial Distinctions in shewing favourable Regards to the Rich, rather than the Poor, merely on Account of their different worldly Circumstances, ye therein work Iniquity; (αμαρτιαν εργαζεσθε) and are convicted, reproved and condemned, as Transgressors of that comprehensive and most excellent Law of Love, (*ver.* 8) which includes the particular Law, that expresly says, *Ye shall do no Unrighteousness in Judgment; thou shalt not respect the Person of the Poor, nor honour the Person of the Mighty: But in Righteousness shalt thou judge thy Neighbour.* (Lev. xix. 15.)

10 For whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one Point, *he is guilty of all.*

10. For admitting, for Argument's sake, that any one were exactly to keep all the rest of the Precepts of God's Law, the Sum of which is Love; yet if he violates it only in one single Instance, he, by just Construction, is guilty of a Breach, though not *of the Whole of* the Law, yet *of the whole*

whole Law, and by its Sentence is condemned as such; (*Gal.* iii. 10) because he as really sins against *the Authority* of the Lawgiver by one Act of Disobedience to any of its Precepts, as if he had broke them all; and so God is *as truly*, though not *as much*, offended by one Transgression, as a Man is hurt by the Injury, that is done to only one Member of his Body; and the whole System of the Law is broke thereby, as a Chain is by breaking only one of its Links.

11 *For he that said, Do not commit Adultery; said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no Adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a Transgressor of the Law.*

11. For the same God, who has said in the moral Law, *Thou shalt not commit Adultery*, has also said, *Thou shalt not* unjustly *kill*, or murder any one whatsoever; both which are contrary to his *Law of Love*. Now if you are not guilty of Adultery, or of any Uncleanness, in Thought, Word, or Deed; yet if you are guilty of Murder in actually committing it, or even in doing, or designing, or desiring to do, what has a Tendency to any unlawful Way of destroying the Life of a Fellow-Creature, you break in upon the Whole of that divine Authority, which enacted the Law that equally forbids both: And the same holds true with respect to all its other Precepts.

12 *So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the Law of Liberty.*

12. Let therefore the whole of your Behaviour in Disposition, Word and Deed toward Fellow-Creatures, as well as toward God, be such as is becoming and right for those to be found in the Practice of, that live under the Gospel-Dispensation, and that judge of their Brethren, and shall be dealt with in the great Day, by, and according to the Tenor of the Gospel, which is a *Doctrine according to Godliness*, (1 Tim. vi. 3) and both obliges to, and, upon Principles of Faith and Love, sets a Man's Soul at Liberty for, an impartial and universal Obedience to all God's Commands, with a noble Freedom and Delight, far surpassing all that could be obtained by the *Mosaic* Dispensation, from which it has also set him free. (See the Note on *Chap.* i. 25.)

13 *For he shall have Judgment without Mercy, that hath shewed no Mercy; and Mercy rejoiceth against Judgment.*

13. For he, whose Faith doth not work by Love, according to the Grace and Obligation of the Gospel, so as to shew Compassion to his poor Brethren, shall pass under a severe Sentence of Condemnation and Wrath, to be executed upon him in the Day of Judgment, without any Mixture of that Mercy, which is held forth in the Doctrine of Christ: And, on the contrary, he who, as the Fruit of his Faith, exercises Tenderness and Loving-Kindness toward them, shall rejoice in his Deliverance from Condemnation and Wrath, and against Fears of being cast in Judgment *; and divine Mercy, according to the Gospel, shall triumph in his Favour, and glory over strict Justice according to the

* *Mercy* may here signify *the Merciful*, the Abstract being put for the Concrete, as the *Circumcision* sometimes is for the *Circumcised:* Or else it may relate to the *Mercy of God*, which shall be extended to the merciful Man, instead of his being dealt with, in a Way of Justice, according to his Deserts.

Law,

Law, in the final Day of Account, agreeable to our Lord's own Representation of it. (*Mat.* xxv. 34—46.)

14 *What* doth it *profit, my Brethren, though a Man say he hath Faith, and have not Works? Can Faith save him?*

14. Of what Advantage then, my Brethren, can it be to any Man, if at the same Time, that he talks and boasts of his believing in Christ, and expecting Salvation by him, he has no good Works springing from his Faith, to prove the Sincerity of it? Can such a Sort of notional Faith, and his Profession of it, that has no prevailing Influence upon him to Holiness and Obedience, be effectual unto his Salvation? No certainly; It is not, in Reality, what it pretends to be, as may be illustrated in the following Manner.

15 *If a Brother or Sister be naked, and be destitute of daily Food;*

15. Suppose any Christian-Brother or Sister were all in Rags, and had not Cloaths sufficient to cover their Nakedness, and keep them warm; and at the same Time were ready to perish with Hunger, through Want of necessary Food for the present Day's Subsistence. (της εφημερȣ τροφης)

16 *And one of you say unto them, Depart in Peace, be* ye *warmed, and be* ye *filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those Things which are needful to the Body; what* doth it *profit?*

16. And if, in such deplorable Circumstances, any of you were to say to them, with an Air of Pity and Concern, Poor distressed Creature! Your Case is very miserable indeed; I wish you well, and should be glad to hear of some good Providence's appearing for your Relief; go your Way with a satisfied Mind, in Hope that God will provide necessary Raiment to cover you, and Food convenient for you: But, though it be in the Power of your Hands, ye nevertheless give them no Manner of Assistance that is necessary for them; What signify all these fine Words and Professions of good Wishes? They are all Mockery, instead of cordial Affection; and can be of no Avail either to them, or to your own Souls.

17 *Even so Faith, if it hath not Works, is dead, being alone.*

17. Just so the Case stands with respect to *Faith*, in God's Account, whose Judgment is according to Truth, If it don't produce spiritual and holy Fruits of Righteousness to his Glory, and the Good of others, it is a mere lifeless Notion, that has nothing vital or operative in it, as being intirely destitute of every genuine Effect, and proper Evidence of its Sincerity; and it can never be profitable to eternal Life, how highly soever any may boast of it, and rely upon it.

18 *Yea, a Man may say, Thou hast Faith, and I have Works: Shew me thy Faith without thy Works, and I will shew thee my Faith by my Works.*

18. Yea, a true Believer may fairly expostulate with, and confound such a vaunting Hypocrite, by arguing with him in the following Manner: You talk mightily of your Faith without giving any Proof of its Sincerity; and I, on the contrary, instead of taking up with high swelling Words and Professions of Faith, have evangelical Works of Love and Obedience to bear Witness that my Faith has its proper Influence upon me. Now, if your Faith is of the right Sort, shew it to be so by your Practice answerable to it, which I challenge you to do; and I, in like Manner, will give the same Proof of mine, even beyond all that you can pro-

duce of that Kind †. Or else demonstrate to me, that your Faith is good and effectual, if you can, (which is indeed impossible) without any suitable Works to support your confident Boastings of it; and I will take a better Course for making it plain to you, that my Faith is vital and efficacious, by its producing Works of Holiness in my Life; and so, in a just and scriptural Way of Reasoning, I will substantially prove the Cause by its Effects, as the Nature of a Tree is known by its Fruits. (*Matth.* vii. 16—20.)

19 *Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well. The Devils also believe and tremble.*

19. If you insist that you have true Faith in a fundamental Doctrine of all real Religion, because you believe that there is a God, in Opposition to Atheists; and that there is but one only living and true God, in Opposition to Heathen-Idolators; thus far it must be owned that you are in the right, and bear an honourable Testimony to the Deity. (καλως ποιεις) But if you rest in a bare Assent to this important Point, it will be of no Avail to your Salvation: For the very Demons themselves, those wicked Spirits that are consigned over to everlasting Destruction, believe this as well as you; not one of them all can deny it; and they tremble at the Thought of his Power and Justice, which, perhaps, is more than you do: But if you have no better Faith than this, you have Reason to be afraid, and must one Day tremble before his terrible Majesty, as much as they.

20 *But wilt thou know, O vain Man, that Faith without Works is dead?*

20. But, O foolish empty Professor of Religion, (κενε) you who take up with such a bare Persuasion, as has no practical Influence upon your Life and Conversation, and yet flatter yourself that all is safe and well, Will you not consider, nor lay to Heart, that, whatever your Pretences and Professions be, a mere doctrinal Faith, without some correspondent Works, as its Product, to prove that 'tis of the right Kind, is, as has been observed, (*v.* 17) a dead worthless Name and Form, which has no Life or Activity in it; nor can be effectual to any saving Advantage? Let me illustrate this in an Example, or two.

21 *Was not Abraham our Father justified by Works, when he had offered Isaac*

21. Was not *Abraham*, the Father of the Faithful, from whom we *Jews* are descended, and in whom the carnal *Israelites* amongst us boast, as though their Relation to him would secure their Happiness? Was not he himself proved

† The Paraphrase on this Verse takes in both the *marginal* and *textual* Reading in our Translation. According to the *marginal* Reading *by thy Works*, which is supported by several good Copies, (Vid. *Mill.* in loc.) it may be considered as the true Believer's Challenge of the boasting Professor to produce that Evidence, which hitherto had not appeared; and engaging to join Issues with him on that Foot. But according to the *textual* Reading *without thy Works*, which seems most agreeable to the Nature of the Argument, it may be understood as a Suggestion of the Impossibility of proving the Truth of Faith without good Works, as its Fruits; and of the Advantage that he has, in Point of Evidence, who can demonstrate the Cause by its Effects.

to

his Son upon the Altar?

to be a sincere Believer,* and so his Faith justified, or demonstrated to be effectual, by his eminent Works of Obedience, when, at God's Command, he fully determined, and actually attempted, as far as God permitted him, to offer up *Isaac*, his beloved and only Son of the Promise, upon the Altar, which he had prepared for that Purpose? (*Gen.* xxii. 1—12.)

22 *Seest thou how Faith wrought with his Works, and by Works was Faith made perfect?*

22. Don't you hereby plainly see, how effectually his Faith operated in producing these remarkably eminent Works of unreserved Subjection and Obedience to God; and how, by performing those Works, his Faith was manifested to be a completely true and right Faith, that had no Defect in any Thing essentially belonging to it?

23 *And the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him*

23. And as this was an undeniable Proof of the Reality and Power of his Faith, that Passage of Scripture was hereby evidently shewn to be fulfilled, (see the Note on *ver.* 21) which spake of him long before, saying, (*Gen.* xv. 6) Abraham *believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for Righte-*

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* It is evident to me, that *Abraham's* being *justified by Works* could not relate to the Justification of *his Person* before God; because in that Sense he was justified long before upon his first believing, even before he was circumcised, *Rom.* iv. 10, 11; nor could it relate to what some call the *secondary* Justification; for this, according to them, depended upon his *finally* persevering in good Works, whereas the Works here specified were performed several Years before his Death. Nor can the other Instance of *Rahab's* being justified by Works (*ver.* 25) relate to her own *personal Justification*, with regard to her *spiritual State*: For there is not the least Appearance, that this Faith of her's was for *Justification to eternal Life*; or that it had any Reference to *Christ*, or to the *Types*, *Prophecies* or *Promises* of him, who was *the Object* to be believed in for a spiritual and eternal Salvation: And her Works were only the Fruit of that Faith which she had relating to *temporal* Salvation, and so proved that she really did believe, that *the Lord had given* Israel *the Land* in which she dwelt, and that *he is God in Heaven above and in Earth below*; and this Faith operated so strongly in her, as to put her upon making Terms for her own and Family's Safety from the Destruction, that was coming upon *Jericho*. (See *Josh.* ii. 8—13.) And the Author to the *Hebrews* takes no Notice of her *Justification*, but only says, with a Reference to the Destruction of that City, *By Faith the Harlot* Rahab *perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the Spies with Peace*. (Heb. xi. 31. See the Note there.) But there was nothing of *justifying Faith* in all this: No, nor in that other Instance, which our Apostle alledged (*ver.* 19) of him that *believes that there is one God*, which *the Devils also believe and tremble*. These Observations seem to lead us to an easier Solution, than I have met with, of the Difficulties that have been raised about reconciling this and the following Verses, which speak of a *Man's being justified by Works, and not by Faith only*, with the Apostle *Paul's* Doctrine of *Justification alone by Faith without Works*, which he so much insisted on, *Rom.* iii. 28, and iv. 1—6, and *Gal.* ii. 16, and in several other Places: For it appears by the Instances which the Apostle *James* here argues upon, that, except in the Case of *Abraham*, it is not, so much at least, about Justification by Christ, through Faith in him, as about the Justification of *the Truth and Sincerity* of Faith in God and in his Promises; which he shews to be dead, and altogether unprofitable, unless it be proved to be genuine by its practical Influence upon the Heart and Life to all holy Obedience; and so he speaks of justifying a Man's *Faith*, or his *Character*, as a sincere Believer, to free him from the Charge of *Hypocrisy*; and not of the Justification of *his Person*, to acquit him from a Charge of Guilt, and from Law-Condemnation, as to *his State* before God, which the Apostle *Paul* so often affirms to be *by Faith without Works*. There is therefore no real Contradiction between these two Apostles; since it is a quite different Sort of *Faith* and of *Justification*, which they respectively speak of, and *that* with a View to different Sorts of *Persons*. The Apostle *James*, to confute licentious *Solifidians*, shews that all Notions and Professions, even of Faith in God, without good Works to justify its *Sincerity*, are vain; and the Apostle *Paul*, to confute those *Self-justiciaries* that were for depending on their own Works, as the Ground of their Acceptance with God to eternal Life, shews that *Justification in his Sight* is only by Faith in Christ and his Righteousness, without any Mixture of Works, as Ingredients into it; though it be not by such a Faith in him, as is not productive of good Works, they being inseparable from all saving *Faith of the Operation of God*.

for Righteousness: And he was called the Friend of God.

ousness, that is, He believed in the Promise of God, that the Messiah should be one of his Seed; and what he believed concerning him, and in him for, was graciously accepted, and placed to his Account, for Righteousness to eternal Life. (See the Note on *Rom.* iv. 3.) And upon the Proof he gave of the Truth of this Faith in offering up his Son, Isaac, whom the promised Messiah was to come, as believing *that God was able to raise him up even from the Dead*, (Heb. xi. 19.) The Lord spoke with high Approbation of this signal Evidence of his Faith, saying, after the Manner of Men, *Now I know that thou fearest God; seeing thou hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son:* (Gen. xxii. 12.) And he was afterwards called *the Friend of God*, (2 Chron. xx. 7, and Isa. xli. 8) as one in Covenant with him, (which was solemnly renewed and ratified, with an Addition of more explicite Promises, on this Occasion, *Gen.* xxii. 16—18) and as one, that had manifested the most dutiful and affectionate Obedience to his Command, and was owned as his peculiar Favourite, and taken into the nearest Communion with him, as his Friend.

24 *Ye see then how that by Works a Man is justified, and not by Faith only.*

24. Ye therefore may plainly discern from hence, that a true Believer's Character is justified against a Charge of Hypocrisy, or of empty Speculation and Profession, by the good Works he produces, as the Fruit of his Faith, and not by mere Pretences to Faith, which is dead, as being alone, without suitable Works. *(ver.* 17.)

25 *Likewise also, was not Rahab the Harlot justified by Works, when she had received the Messengers, and had sent them out another Way?*

25. I would also instance in another Person, even a *Gentile*, whose Faith was not so strong as *Abraham*'s; Was not the Character of *Rabab* the Harlot, who dwelt at *Jericho*, justified by her Works, which unquestionably shew'd that she firmly believed God would certainly deliver that City up to *Israel*, (see the Notes on *ver.* 21, and *Heb.* xi. 31) when, upon that Faith, she kindly entertained the Messengers, which *Joshua* sent to spy out the Land, and directed them to make their Escape in a Way, that might prevent their falling into the Hands of their Enemies, who sought to kill them; and engaged the Spies to shew Kindness to her and her Father's House, and save them alive? (*Josh.* ii. 1—16.) By these Examples you plainly see how necessary Works of Obedience are to demonstrate the Sincerity of any one's Faith in every Case whatsoever.

26 *For as the Body without the Spirit is dead, so Faith without Works is dead also.*

26. For it appears from all this, that as the human Body without Breath, or without a Soul to animate it, is a loathsome dead Carcase, very offensive, and utterly incapable of discharging any Functions of this Life; so all that Sort of Faith that is not efficacious for bringing forth good Works, which are the inseparable Effects and Tokens of a living Faith, really is, and shews itself to be, intirely dead and detestable in a spiritual Sense.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How natural is it for carnal Minds to judge according to outward Appearance; and to be influenced by the gay Dress and splendid Ornaments of the Rich, to give them an unjustifiable Preference; and by the mean Apparel of the Poor, to use them with Contempt and Scorn, whatever their respective religious Characters be! surely, this sort of Partiality proceeds from a very corrupt Biass of the Heart. But how unsuitable is this to the Temper and Behaviour of true Believers in Jesus Christ! The Professors of his Name ought to consider, that God has mostly chosen the Poor of this World to Faith and all its Riches here, and to the Inheritance of his heavenly Kingdom hereafter, which he has promised, without Respect of Persons on external Accounts, to all that heartily love him; and the Poor among them, as much as the Rich, are Members of the Lord of Glory. They shou'd likewise recollect, that Wickedness, Oppression and blasphemous Reproaches on the blessed Name of Christ, by which it is their Honour to be called, chiefly reign among Persons of Rank and Figure in the World; and that, though decent Respect is to be paid to all, according to their civil Stations; yet favouring the Rich, rather than the Poor, in religious Affairs, or in Matters of Right and Wrong, is exceeding sinful. It is a Transgression of the moral Law, by a Breach of which, were it only in one Point, a Man becomes guilty of breaking its whole System, and as really affronts the whole of its divine Authority, which equally enjoins Obedience to every one of its Precepts, as if he had broke them all; and it is a direct Violation of that noble comprehensive Law, which requires us to love our Neighbours as ourselves; yea, is utterly contrary to the whole Tenor of the Gospel of the Grace of God, which may be called the Law of Liberty, but leaves no Room for any to expect Favour and Mercy in the Judgment of the great Day, who are not constrained by its Endearments to shew Love and Mercy to the Poor, especially of the Houshold of Faith. What signify fine words of Pity and Compassion, and empty Wishes of all needful Supplies to hungry and naked Christians, without doing any Thing, according to our Opportunities and Abilities, for their Relief? They are all mere Pretence and Hypocrisy. And must we not, with equal Truth, pronounce, that all Notions and Professions of *Faith*, unless it be productive of, and evidenced by good Works, is a vain and dead *Faith?* It can never be proved to be otherwise. Though *Abraham*'s and *Rahab*'s Works did not justify their Persons before God; yet they justified their Faith, and shew'd it to be true and genuine before Men, as it was apparently practical in them severally: But a bare Assent of the Mind, without holy Effects on the Heart and Life, is no better than the Faith of Devils, who believe there is one God, and tremble for Fear of him, as all mere Notionalists in Religion one Day will. Upon the whole then, It must be concluded that Faith without Works is as dead and offensive to God, as any human Carcase, that has no Soul to enliven and actuate it, can be to us. And he is a vain Man indeed, who imagines that such a Faith can save him.

CHAP. III.

The Apostle cautions against an arrogant assuming Temper and Behaviour, and against the Mischief of an unsanctified and unruly Tongue, 1—13. *and shews the Excellency of heavenly Wisdom, which discovers itself in Purity, Meekness and Peace, in Opposition to that which is litigious, carnal and worldly.* 14—18.

TEXT.

1 *MY Brethren, be not many Masters, knowing that we shall receive the*

PARAPHRASE.

1 TAKE heed, my Christian-Brethren, lest many of you affect to be (διδασκαλοι) Teachers of others without sufficient Qualifications for it; and much more, lest they give way, like the *Jewish* Doctors, to a magisterial and censorious

greater Condemnation.

censorious Temper in Matters of Religion; as being fully convinced that the more any of us indulge, and act according to it, the greater will be our Sin, and the more severe our Sentence of Condemnation at the last Day. (*Matth.* vii. 1—5.)

2 *For in many Things we offend all. If any Man offend not in Word, the same* is *a perfect Man,* and *able also to bridle the whole Body.*

2. For it must be own'd that all, even the best of us, are daily guilty of many Slips and Falls, that are Transgressions of both Tables of God's holy Law, offensive to him and to our Fellow-Creatures, which should make us very humble and modest in our Thoughts of ourselves, and sparing in our Censures of others. But if any one, like *David,* (Ps. xxxix. 1.) is enabled to keep a Bridle upon his Tongue, that it utter no opprobrious, false, or other sinful Words, from a Predominance of any corrupt or excessive Passion; (See *Chap.* i. 21. 26.) he is a sincere Believer and finished Christian; (See the Note on 1 *Cor.* ii. 6.) is a Man of rich Attainments in Knowledge and Experience, Integrity and Holiness; and is furnished with such divine Assistances, as are sufficient to curb all the Irregularities of his Conduct, and to spread an amiable Influence through all the Members of his Body, and the whole Behaviour of his Life, to the advantage of every religious and civil Body that he is related to.

3 *Behold, we put Bits in the Horses Mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole Body.*

3. To illustrate the Benefit of a due Government of the Tongue, Observe how we deal with the Horses we ride upon. We don't let them run at Random, but bridle them with Bits in their Mouths, to check and restain their mettlesome Sallies, and direct their Course that they may move according to our Pleasure: And by this means we turn their whole Bodies to the Right or the Left, and into one and another Road, just as we think proper.

4 *Behold also the Ships, which* though they be *so great, and* are *driven of fierce Winds, yet are turned about with a very small Helm, whithersoever the Governor listeth.*

4. Observe also how Men use to manage the largest Ships at Sea in Sailing; which though they are such huge Vessels, and sometimes tossed about and driven out of their Course by contrary and tempestuous Winds, are nevertheless turned about and directed into their due Bearings again, by so very small an Instrument as the Rudder, which Way soever he at the Helm is minded to steer them.

5 *Even so the Tongue is a little Member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little Fire kindleth!*

5. In like Manner, a Man's Tongue is indeed a very small Member, in Comparison which the whole Bulk of his Body; and as it is of great Use, when properly managed, under the Influence of divine Grace, for directing the whole Series of Life; so, if it be left under the Power and Conduct of an unsanctified carnal Heart, it talks at an extravagant Rate with all the Airs of Haughtiness and Contempt of others. And pray take Notice how by injurious Language, it, like a Spark of Fire in the Midst of combustible Matter, kindles a terrible Flame of Contention and Confusion all around it.

6. And

6 *And the Tongue is a Fire, a World of Iniquity. So is the Tongue amongst our Members, that it defileth the whole Body, and setteth on Fire the Course of Nature; and it is set on fire of Hell.*

6. And an unruly, furious and abusive Tongue is really one of the worst of Fires: It vents a great deal of Sin; is the outlet of the whole Source of Wickedness that lies in a Man's Heart; (*Matth.* xv. 18.) and is the Cause of abundance of Iniquity amongst others; Such a mischievous and destructive Member is this little one amidst the other Members of our Bodies, that, by its exorbitant Licentiousness, it spreads Guilt and Defilement through the whole Man, and kindles such Wrath and Anger in our own and other People's Passions, as throw the whole Course of the moral World into a pernicious Ferment, which runs through (τον τροχον της γενεσεως) the whole Circle of every Generation, and the whole Rotation of Life, from Youth to old Age: And as all this Evil is of a hellish Nature, and is kindled and blown up by the diabolical Influence of the Accuser of the Brethren and Father of Lies; so the Tongue, together with the Man who lays no Restraint upon it, will at length be tormented in the unquenchable Flames of Hell-Fire, (*Luke* xvi. 24.) and *that* most justly, since such a violent Tongue is more refractory and unmanageable, than the wildest and fiercest of all the lower Ranks of Creatures.

7 *For every kind of Beasts, and of Birds, and of Serpents, and of things in the Sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of Mankind:*

7. For all sorts of savage Beasts and wild Fowls, and creeping Animals, (ερπετων) even venomous Serpents, and voracious Fishes and Monsters of the Sea, (εναλιων) are by human Labour and Art subdued and kept within Bounds, and have been brought under Confinement and Restraint, and master'd by Mankind, who still retain something of the original Grant of Dominion over them. (*Gen.* i. 26.)

8 *But the Tongue can no Man tame: it is an unruly Evil, full of deadly Poison.*

8. But when any one's Tongue launches out in Revilings, Falshoods and other malignant Speeches, under the Power of strong, furious and vile Passions, it is more untractable than all these; No Man upon Earth can master it by his own Power and Skill; nor can any other Man gain an intire Conquest over it: It is a most ungovernably evil Instrument, spitting out the Venom of Pride, Malice, Envy, Reproach and Falshood, and all sorts of Wickedness, which are as destructive to a Man's own Soul, and to the Welfare of Society, as the most mortal Poison is to the Body: *The Poison of Asps*, the most desperate of all others, *is under* such a Man's *Lips.* (Rom. iii. 13.)

9 *Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we Men, which are made after the Similitude of God.*

9. An unsanctified Tongue runs so much at Random, that some of us, who as Men, and much more as professing Christians, ought, like *David*, to count it our Glory, (*Ps.* xxx. 12.) and to employ it in celebrating the Praises of the Lord, use it, one while, for speaking honourably of God, praying to him, and offering up Thanksgivings and Praises in public and private, even to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of all Believers in him, the Father of Mercies, and the Author of our Beings and of all our Enjoyments; and, at another Time, we abuse it, pouring out Revilings, and horrid Imprecations and Curses

upon

upon our Fellow-Creatures, for whom we ought to have a Reverence, as they were originally created after the Image of God in Knowledge, Righteousness and true Holiness, and are still form'd after his Likeness in the natural Faculties of their rational Souls, and in their Dominion over the Creature; and are renewed according to his holy Image by regenerating Grace.

10 *Out of the same Mouth proceedeth Blessing and Cursing. My Brethren, these things ought not so to be.*

10. So that out of one and the same Mouth come forth Blessings and Praises in one Mood, and Curses in another. Certainly, my Christian-Brethren, these contrary Uses of the same Tongue are monstrously incongruous and absurd; and ought, by no Means, to have any Place in those who make a Profession of Christ and his Gospel.

11 *Doth a Fountain send forth at the same Place sweet* Water *and bitter?*

11. They are as utterly inconsistent with true Religion and Godliness, as it wou'd be to suppose that Streams of contrary Qualities proceed from the same Opening of one Fountain. Did ye ever know? Or is it possible, in the Nature of Things, that one and the same Spring cou'd gush out at the same Place, and flow abroad in Streams of Water, some of which are quite fresh, and agreeable to the Palate; and others intirely brackish and distasteful?

12 *Can the Fig-Tree, my Brethren, bear Olive-Berries? either a Vine Figs? so* can *no Fountain both yield salt Water and fresh.*

12. Or can a Fig-Tree, my Brethren, produce the Fruit which grows only upon Olive-Trees? Or was it ever known, that a Grape-Vine brought forth Figs? why, full as inconsistent is it to suppose that a Man's Heart, the Fountain from whence all his Words proceed, shou'd freely and habitually vent itself in Ways of talking, that are of as directly contrary a Nature, as the salt Water of the Sea, and the sweet Water of the finest Spring are one to the other.

13 *Who* is *a wise Man, and endued with Knowledge amongst you? let him shew out of a good Conversation his Works with Meekness of Wisdom.*

13. Who is there then among you, that wou'd approve himself to be wise toward God, and for himself and others; prudent in his Conduct; and endued with the true Knowledge of God, of Christ, and of himself, and with a spiritual discerning of the Absurdity and Self-Contradiction of these Things? Let it be his great Care and Concern that, by an honourable Deportment in the Church and in the World, he may evidently practice all Manner of good Works, in the whole Course of his Conversation, with a meek and humble Spirit, which proceeds from, and discovers the truest Wisdom.

14. *But if ye have bitter envying and Strife in your Hearts, glory not, and lie not against the Truth.*

14. But if, instead of such a laudable Temper and Behaviour, ye give a Loose to your sinful Passions; and your Hearts are full of envious, quarelsome and contentious Dispositions and Designs, which are a bitter Torment to your own Souls, and, when breaking out in Words, are grievously stinging and, wounding to others: Never be fond or boast of such a malignant Temper, that is so directly contrary to the meek and humble Spirit of the Gospel; nor dare to conceive, or utter any Falshood to put

put a fine Glofs upon it; nor make any hypocritical Pretences to Sincerity or Prudence in fuch a Courfe of Life.

15 *This Wifdom defcendeth not from above, but* is *earthly, fenfual, devilifh.*

15. What ever any may think of it, Let me tell you, that this fort of pretended Wifdom does not come from Heaven, nor is God the Author of it; but it proceeds intirely from an Excefs of earthly and fenfual Propenfions to the Things of this World, which unregenerate Men are under the Power of; and is excited by the Devil himfelf, bears his Image, pleafes him, and promotes his Interefts and Defigns for doing Mifchief.

16. *For where envying and Strife* is, *there* is *Confufion, and every evil Work.*

16. For wherever an envious, cenforious and litigious Spirit is indulged, and breaks forth from the Heart through the Lips, its natural Tendency, and ordinary Effect, is nothing but Difturbance and Deftruction to the Peace and Happinefs of a Man's own Soul, and of all about him, together with every other Kind of Iniquity and Calamity.

17. *But the Wifdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle,* and *eafy to be intreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits, without Partiality, and without Hypocrify.*

17. But the Wifdom that is heavenly and divine, as *coming down from the Father of Lights,* (Chap. i. 17.) and tending to heavenly Happinefs, is juft the Reverfe of all this: It has, in the firft Place, a ftrict Regard to Purity of Doctrine and Manners in Heart, Speech and Behaviour; and then, as far as is confiftent with Truth and Holinefs, it ftudies the Things that make for Peace; and in order thereunto, it difpofes the Soul to be mild and courteous in its Treatment of others, and *in Meeknefs to inftruct thofe that oppofe themfelves*; (2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.) and to be eafily perfwaded to all that is Good, to be open to Conviction, and attend to all reafonable Confiderations for Condefcenfion and Forbearance; it alfo abounds in Acts of Kindnefs and Compaffion to the Poor and Afflicted, and in every other Fruit of Righteoufnefs; together with a Generofity that has no Refpect of Perfons, and that lays afide all Severity and Partiality in judging and condemning others; and with a Sincerity that is free from Diffimulation. (*Rom.* xii. 9.)

18 *And the Fruit of Righteoufnefs is fown in Peace of them that make Peace.*

18. And the Principle, productive of this righteous Behaviour, is fown, like good Seed, in the Peace of a Believer's own Mind, and of his Chriftian-Brethren, and of the World all around him, as in a fertile Soil; and fhall be reap'd in a plentiful Harveft of Profperity here, and for ever hereafter, by thofe, who, in a Way of fpiritual Wifdom, are difpofed unto, and lay themfelves out in promoting, fuch a pure and holy Peace.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What Caufe have we to be modeft and humble, inftead of indulging an arrogant and cenforious Temper towards our Chriftian-Brethren, while we confider, in how many Things we all offend againft God and them! And what an Aggravation wou'd Inobfervance of our *own*, and Severity on *others* Faults be, of Self-Condemnation at the great Day! How important is a due Government of the Tongue! He that obtains Help from God to rule his

own Tongue is a great Proficient in Religion, and well qualified for ordering his whole Conversation aright. Though the most mettlesome Horses are governed by a Bit and Bridle, and the largest Ships, when driven by contrary and boisterous Winds, are reduced to their proper Course by a small Rudder; and though the most wild and savage Animals of the Earth, Air and Sea, may be, and have been brought into Subjection by human Art; yet no Man of himself can get such a Mastery over his Tongue, as thoroughly to bridle its Excess; nor can any other Man effectually cure its Malignity. Though it be but a little Member, and, if well managed, is of great Use; yet when it flies out into bitter Expressions, it is an unruly Evil, and is like a Spark of Fire that sets Abundance of combustible Matter into a Flame. It is indeed the worst of Fire, that spreads Confusion, Defilement and Destruction through the whole Man, and amongst all around him; derives its Original from Hell; and is in Danger of everlasting Fire, without one Drop of Water to cool it. But O how monstrously absurd, and inconsistent is it, for the same Mouth to utter the Praises of God, and horrid Imprecations upon Men, that are formed after his Image! This is as directly contrary to the Christian-Character, as it wou'd be to suppose that one and the same Fountain can send forth sweet and bitter, fresh and salt Water at the same opening; or that a Fig-Tree can bear Olives, or a Vine Figs. If therefore the Heart and Tongue are full of Envy, Animosity and angry Contentions, we ought to be ashamed, instead of glorying in them. For if any, that boast of their Wisdom, give Way to these pernicious Evils, it is all a false Pretence; it is only the Wisdom of the Flesh, which proceeds from earthly and sensual Passions and Appetites, and is propagated by the Devil himself after his own Likeness. But he who with a meek and humble Spirit walks honourably, as becomes the Gospel of Christ, is endued with the most excellent Wisdom and spiritual Understanding. This Man's Wisdom has its Original from Heaven, and shall issue in heavenly Happiness; it has a strict Regard to Purity in Principle and Practice; and then, in full Consistency with this, it studies the Things that make for Peace with all Affability, and Perswadeableness to every Thing that is right; and abounds in Compassion to the Afflicted, and in all Beneficence, as Occasions require, without any partial Respect of Persons, or hypocritical Pretences to more than we really mean. And O the blessed Fruit of such a wise and holy Deportment! They, who thus study and endeavour to promote this excellent sort of Prosperity and Peace, are therein sowing Seed, which will spring up to their own Comfort here, and everlasting Joy hereafter.

CHAP. IV.

The Apostle cautions against corrupt Affections, as the Root of Wars and Quarrels, and the Bane of Prayer; and against an inordinate Love of this World, as Enmity with God who gives Grace to the Humble, 1—6. *Directs proud and carnal Professors to submit and betake themselves to God, and resist the Devil, and to abandon and lament their sinful Courses, in order to their being exalted,* 7—10. *and exhorts all professing Christians to speak candidly one of another, and to undertake no Affairs of Life without a constant Regard to the Will and Providence of God,* 11—17.

TEXT.

1 FROM *whence* come *Wars and Fightings among you?* come they *not hence*, even *of your Lusts, that war in your Members?*

PARAPHRASE.

1. AS I wou'd fain excite you to a just Abhorrence of the Evils, that lie in Opposition to the Peace but now recommended, (*Chap.* iii. 18.) Let me ask you, and leave the Answer to your own Consciences, What is it that gives Rise to, and foments the dreadful Contentions, Animosities and Broils, that have spread so much Misery and Confusion among Mankind, and professing Christians, as they

they have among you of the *Jewish* Nation? † Does not the Root and Source of them all lie in your corrupt Affections, such as Pride, Envy, Covetousness, and an immoderate Thirst after Dominion over others, or after the Riches, Honours, or Pleasures of this World, each of which intemperate Appetites contend for the Mastery in all the Powers of your Souls, and over all the Members of your Bodies, (See the Note on *Rom.* vii. 5) and all together war against them, to their Defilement, Injury and Ruin, and against the Dictates of Reason, Religion and Conscience, and even against the Spirit of God himself in his holy Operations?

2 *Ye lust, and have not: Ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: Ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.*

2. Ye inordinately desire and pursue a Gratification of your guilty Passions; and cannot compass your criminal Designs: Ye are ready to devour one another; and have an envious Reach (ζηλοῦτε) after the Possessions of others; and are not able (ἐπιτυχεῖν) to gain the Advantages, which ye so greedily covet; much less can ye find your Happiness in them: Ye still continue to strive and contend furiously for Victory, Wealth and Grandeur; and yet fail of obtaining your own Ends, and so meet with perpetual Disappointments, because ye don't seriously ask Counsel of God to direct your Way, as to what ye ought to do, and to succeed your Attempts, as far as they may be agreeable to his Will.

3 *Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your Lusts.*

3. Or, if at any Time ye pray for Prosperity in your Affairs, your Prayers are not answered; because your Principles, Motives and Ends, in asking the Things ye would have, are all wrong; not, as they ought to be, that ye may use them for the Glory of God, and your own and others real Good, but that ye may riot upon them, and spend them in a profuse Indulgence to your own Vanity, Ambition and Luxury, which is very offensive to God.

4 *Ye Adulterers, and Adultresses, know ye not that the Friendship of the World is Enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a Friend of the World, is the Enemy of God.*

4. Whosoever ye be, whether of the Male, or Female Sex, that under a religious Character, as God's Covenant-People, have such eager Appetites after the Pleasures and Enjoyments of this World, as alienate your Hearts from him; ye are guilty of no less Sin than spiritual Adultery, in admitting a Competitor with him, to whom ye are visibly betrothed, as your spiritual Husband. Do ye not understand and consider so plain a Point as this, that an excessive Fondness for the great and good Things of this World, and a Con-

† Some have thought that the Apostle here refers to the Seditions, Tumults and Wars that raged about this Time among the *Jews* in their Quarrels one with another, and Rebellions against the *Romans* to throw off their Yoke, and obtain to themselves that temporal Dominion, which they vainly imagined they had a divine Right to; and that some *Jewish* Christians joined therein from their carnal Notions of the Messiah, as though he were to set up a temporal Kingdom among his Disciples, and make them Lords of the Universe.——But as the national Wars were in *Judea*, and are supposed to have been after the Time of writing this Epistle, we may rather understand the Apostle to speak of Contentions and Quarrels *in general*, which on various Occasions prevailed among the *Jewish* Professors of Christianity; and, alas! have sadly broke out among other Professors of it, all along, in public and private Life, to this very Day.

formity to worldly-minded Men in following their ſinful Courſes to ingratiate yourſelves with them, and to obtain thoſe Things, ſtand in direct Oppoſition to the holy Nature and Will of God, and are utterly inconſiſtent with that ſupreme Love and Affection, which ye owe to him? (1 *John* ii. 15, 16.) Whoever therefore is ſo attached to the Things of the World, as to place his chief Happineſs in them, and will court the Friendſhip of the Men of this World, at any Rate, to procure them, is in Heart an Enemy to, inſtead of a Friend and Lover of God, and takes the Part of his Adverſaries, inſtead of ſiding with him.

5 Do ye think that the Scripture ſaith in vain, The Spirit that dwelleth in us luſteth to Envy?

5. Are ye ſo vain as to ſuppoſe, that thoſe Scriptures of the Old Teſtament ſtand on Record to no good Purpoſe, or are not worth regarding, which ſtrongly remonſtrate, in many Paſſages, againſt Pride, Envy, Covetouſneſs, and the like, and which give us ſuch a View of the Corruption of human Nature, as ſhews that the Temper, which abides and powerfully works in us, 'till we are renew'd by Grace, is ſo impetuous and ambitious in its Purſuits after earthly Things, as to carry the Soul into envious Thoughts of thoſe that have more of them, than we have ourſelves †? Or, on the contrary, Do ye vainly imagine, that the Spirit of God which dwells in us, who are true Believers, excites ſuch a carnal worldly Diſpoſition in us? No, This cannot be the Nature, Tendency, or Deſign of his holy Influence upon us.

6 But he giveth more Grace. Wherefore he ſaith, God reſiſteth the Proud, but giveth Grace unto the Humble.

6. But, on the contrary, in whomſoever the Spirit dwells, he, or God by him, gives them ſuch a gracious Impreſſion as tends to Humility, Self-denial, Love and all Goodneſs; and gives a greater Abundance of it, than to leave them under the Power of any corrupt Affections. Therefore, to encourage their Hopes and Prayers for all needful Aſſiſtances, he ſpeaks in his holy Word, (*Pſ.* xviii. 27, and *Prov.* iii. 34, and xxix. 23) as our bleſſed Lord himſelf alſo doth, (*Matth.* xxiii. 12, and *Luke* xviii. 14) to this Effect, God ſets himſelf, as it were in Battle-Aray, (ἀντιτάσσεται) with Indignation and Diſdain, againſt thoſe that are ambitious and haughty, ſelf-conceited and ſelf-ſufficient, as placing their Confidence and Happineſs in the Things of this Life, or in their own Wiſdom, or Strength, or Deſerts; he drives them away from his gracious Preſence, who thus ſet themſelves

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† By *the Spirit that dwells in us* ſome underſtand *the corrupt Diſpoſition*, which is naturally in our Hearts; and others, *the Spirit of God*, who is often ſaid to *dwell* in true Believers. If we take it in the *firſt* Senſe, the whole Verſe is to be conſidered as *one* Queſtion; or if we would take it in the *laſt*, it muſt be divided into *two*, as in the Paraphraſe; one or other of which appears to be the moſt probable Senſe, among the numerous obſcure Interpretations that have been given of this Verſe, a very large Collection of which is made by *Eſtius*, *Paræus*, and others. And if the *laſt* of theſe Interpretations be admitted, which is ſupported by Criticiſms in *Glaſſius*, and Dr. *Whitby*, then the Relative *He*, at the Beginning of the next Verſe, refers to *the Spirit*, or to *God*, ver. 4, as working by him. But which ever of theſe Ways we go into for explaining the Words, *what the Scripture ſays* ſeems not to refer to any particular Paſſage, but to the Doctrine, of the Old Teſtament, as *that* may be gathered from many Places, which are recited by *Paræus*.

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against him; and defeats their Aims at Honour and Esteem among Men. But he extends his Favour to, and bestows his special Grace, with growing Strength and Vigour, upon the lowly in Heart, who have such humbling Thoughts of themselves, and of the Emptiness and Vanity of all Creature-Enjoyments, as to place their Hope and Happiness intirely in him. (See *Prov.* iii. 34.) So that to those, to whom he has given the Grace of *Humility*, he gives still more Grace of every Kind, according to their Wants and Desires; and exalts them in his Favour, and in the Eyes of all good Men. (*ver.* 10.)

7 *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you:*

7. In humble Dependence therefore on his free Favour and gracious Influence, yield yourselves up, with an obediential and unreserved Subjection, to the Guidance and Disposals, Authority and Will of God, as manifested by his Word and Providence; and be contented with such Things as ye have. Whatever Satan may suggest against this; or whatever Attempts he may make by his subtle Devices, or fiery Darts, to dishearten you in, or draw you off from, the Way of Duty, give no Place to him; (*Eph.* iv. 27.) but *be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might, and put on the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand*, and *resist him stedfastly in the Faith*; (Eph. vi. 10, 11, 13, and 1 Pet. v. 9.) and he will flee from you, like a vanquished Enemy that dares no longer to encounter you.

8 *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse* your *Hands, ye Sinners, and purify* your *Hearts, ye double-minded.*

8. And as ever ye would effectually maintain your Ground, prevail against him, and get rid of all his Temptations, Be earnest and importunate in humble and fiducial Approaches to God, through Christ, on a Throne of Grace, in a Way of *Duty*; and he will certainly come near to you, in a Way of *Mercy* and *Faithfulness*, for your Direction, Relief and Comfort, according to his Promise. (*Jer.* xxix. 13.) And whereas some among you have, thro' the Suggestions of Satan and of your own evil Hearts, become grievous Sinners before God, See that ye wash your Hands in Innocence, and so compass the Altar of the Lord, (*Ps.* xxvi. 6.) lifting *up holy Hands* in your Prayers, *without Wrath and Doubting*; (1 Tim. ii. 8.) and remember that if *ye regard Iniquity in your Hearts, the Lord will not hear you.* (Ps. lxvi. 18.) Beg of him therefore to enable you to cleanse your Hands from Violence and Blood, Extortion and Bribes, and every other Sin, with which they have been defiled; and to purge your Hearts from Pride, Covetousness, Envy, and the whole Source of Iniquity, which work within you, that ye may abhor, renounce and utterly depart from them; and may be so thoroughly reformed in Heart and Life, as to behave no longer like double-minded Professors, whose Thoughts and Services are divided between God and the World. (*Chap.* i. 8. See the Paraphrase there.)

9 *Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep:*

9. In serious Reflection upon all your Abominations, Let your Souls be deeply impressed with penitential Sorrow, as those

Let your Laughter be turned to Mourning, and your *Joy to Heaviness.*

those that sincerely and bitterly lament, and weep over them, and for the Miseries they have brought upon you, or exposed you to: Let all your Jollity, Mirth and Gaiety, which ye have shamefully indulged in gratifying your sensual Appetites, be turned into ingenuous and evangelical Mournings; and all your carnal Pleasure into a religious Grief and Sadness of Heart, on Account of your Provocations, and for Fear of God's Judgments.

10 *Humble yourselves in the Sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.*

10. In this Manner, Lay yourselves at the Foot of God with the lowest Prostration and Self-Abasement, a Offenders of his sacred Majesty, and with an affecting Conviction that he knows your Hearts and principally looks at them, and observes all the secret Workings of Corruption, on one Hand, and of contrite Sorrow on the other, that pass within them: And he, in his own Time and Way, will revive your drooping Souls with a Sense of his pardoning, and with recovering Grace; will raise you up above all your Fears and Troubles, temporal and spiritual; and will exalt you to Honour among his People in this World, and to immortal Glory in the World to come.

11 *Speak not Evil one of another, Brethren. He that speaketh Evil of* his *Brother, and judgeth his Brother speaketh Evil of the Law, and judgeth the Law: But if thou judge the Law, thou art not a Doer of the Law, but a Judge.*

11. But to return to the Vices of the Tongue, (*Chap.* iii. 5, &c.) Be very cautious, my Brethren in the Lord, of censuring and reviling one another, or of aggravating and needlesly exposing each other's Faults; and much more of raising and propagating false Reports to the Prejudice of Fellow-Christians: For he that slanders his Christian-Brother, to whom, as such, he ought to be most kindly affectionate, and that takes upon himself rashly to judge and condemn him, without any just Cause, or for Things which are lawful to him, reproaches the Law of God itself; and practically arraigns and condemns the Wisdom, Equity, Holiness and Goodness, both of the Law, which allows of the Things he condemns, and of the Law, which requires him to *love his Neighbour as himself,* (Chap. ii. 8.) and forbids his *going up and down as a Tale-bearer among his People,* (Lev. xix. 16.) and rashly *judging* others, *lest he himself be judged.* (Matth. vii. 1.) But if any of you pretend to set up for Censors of the Law itself, you don't act the Part of a Subject in obeying its Commands, but assume to yourself the Authority of a Judge, which don't belong to you.

12 *There is one Law-giver, who is able to save, and to destroy. Who art thou that judgest another?*

12. To convince you of the Evil of this, Consider that there is only one Author and Giver of the Law, and none but he has Authority to enact and execute it, relating to Religion and Conscience: He therefore has the sole Right of being the Lord and Judge of his own Law; and he alone is able to distribute its Rewards to the wrongfully accused, in a temporal and eternal Salvation; and its Punishments to uncharitable Condemners, in present and everlasting Destruction. Who then are you, a poor, vain, weak and fallible, yea, sinful Creature, that you should take upon you to judge and condemn any one, who is accountable only to his own Lord and Master, and must be saved, or lost for

ever,

ever, according to the Sentence he ſhall paſs upon him? (*Rom.* xiv. 4.)

13 *Go to now, ye that ſay, To-day or To-morrow we will go into ſuch a City, and continue there a Year, and buy, and ſell, and get Gain:*

13. Let me now a little expoſtulate with thoſe of you, that are ſo worldly-minded, and ſo thoughtleſs of God and his Providence, as to promiſe yourſelves long Life and Proſperity upon Earth, and ſay, with a peremptory Air of Self-ſufficiency and independent Confidence, We will go To-day or To-morrow, or whenever we pleaſe, to this or the other trading City; and there we will ſtay a conſiderable Time, and (if need be) for a whole Year together, and purſue our Traffic or Merchandize in buying and ſelling various Sorts of Goods, and ſo enrich ourſelves by our own Wiſdom, Care and Diligence.

14 *Whereas ye know not what* ſhall be *on the Morrow. For what* is *your Life? It is even a Vapour that appeareth for a little Time, and then vaniſheth away.*

14. This is all preſumptuous, irreligious, not to ſay atheiſtical Language, in the Hearts or Mouths of ſuch frail Mortals as ye are, who, together with all your Affairs, are in a precarious Situation, ever liable to numberleſs Diſappointments, and intirely dependent on the ſovereign Will and Providence of God, and know not what a Day may bring forth, what Turn your Circumſtances may take, or whether ye yourſelves ſhall be in the Land of the Living another Day: For, pray conſider, What is your Life itſelf, that ye ſhould talk with ſuch confident Aſſurance of what ye will do for Time to come? Ye have no Security for any, the leaſt, Continuance of it, which may ſuddenly and unawares be cut off; much leſs can ye be ſure of Opportunity and Ability to compaſs your Deſigns, one Day or Moment beyond the preſent. Your Breath is in your Noſtrils, and your Life, with all that depends upon it relating to this World, may well be compared to a fleeting Vapour, which riſes from the Earth or from Water, and is viſible for a little while, and then is immediately ſcattered and loſt in the Atmoſphere, and is ſeen no more.

15 *For that ye* ought *to ſay, If the Lord will, we ſhall live and do this, or that.*

15. A contrary Way of thinking and ſpeaking therefore becomes you; and whatever Schemes or Projects ye have formed, and would purſue, it ought always to be with this humble and neceſſary *Proviſo*, If it ſhall pleaſe God to favour our Views, we ſhall continue in Life for diſcharging the Duties of our Stations; and then, in a Dependence on his Guidance, Aſſiſtance and Bleſſing, we intend to tranſact this and the other Buſineſs, which, by his Will, we may have Opportunity and Ability to engage in; ſtill leaving Events with him, *who is our Life, and the Length of our Days; in whoſe Hand is our Breath, and whoſe are all our Ways.* (Deut. xxx. 20, and Dan. v. 23.

16 *But now ye rejoice in your Boaſtings. All ſuch rejoicing is Evil.*

16. But now, inſtead of talking in this humble Creaturely and Chriſtian-like Strain, which is ſo honourable to God, and ſuitable to your State of Unworthineſs, and of intire Dependence upon him for *Life, and Breath, and all Things*, (Acts xvii. 25.) Thoſe of you that leave him out of your Thoughts, and of your ſecular Employments, in the Manner

ner but now mentioned, glory in your own Sufficiency, which ye speak of with a boasting Air of Self-Confidence. Alas! all such Sort of glorying is very shameful; it is abominable and foolish, injurious to yourselves and a bad Example to others; and is exceeding sinful and affrontive to God, *whose Kingdom rules over all:* (Ps. ciii. 19.) And, were ye to reflect seriously upon it, your own Consciences, as professing Christians, could not but tell you that it is so.

17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is Sin.

17. This therefore is a high Aggravation of your Crime, since in this, as well as all other Cases, the Man who knows what is right and good, acceptable to God and suitable to the Relation he stands in to him, and yet acts in direct Contradiction to his Light, thereby renders his Sin abundantly greater, and more inexcusable and self-condemning, than theirs, who do the same Thing, but, through meer Ignorance, have no Notion of the Evil of it to restrain them from it: And the Sinner against the Convictions of his own Conscience shall be more severely punished, than others, in the great Day of Account. (See *Luke* xii. 47, 48.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

Alas! What dreadful Work do the Lusts of Pride, Covetousness and Envy make in the World! Hence proceed Wars and all Manner of Discords, that are destructive to civil and religious Society, and to a Man's own Soul: They carry him into wicked Desires and Attempts, which can turn to no good Account; and either make him cast off Prayer, or pervert its Ends in asking temporal Advantages, that he may gratify his own Corruptions, instead of glorifying God and doing Good with them. No Wonder, that such carnal Prayers are not answered. —O what an Enemy to God, and adulterous Disaffection to him in Professors of his Name, is an excessive Fondness for any Thing of this World! How justly doth the Scripture condemn this sensual Temper, which naturally works in us! And how contrary is it to the Suggestions and Influences of the Holy Spirit, who dwells in true Believers, and freely gives Grace, with all needful Increases of it, to humble Souls; but rejects the Proud with Abhorrence and Disdain! How unsuitable to our creaturely Dependence and Christian-Character is it, to form and prosecute Schemes for this World, without a religious Sense of, and Dependence upon the Providence of God, as if our Times and the Success of our Affairs lay in our own Hands, though Life itself is but as a Vapour that soon vanishes away! Surely every Thing ought to be undertaken with an Eye to God and Submission to his Will. A contrary Way of thinking and talking is a vain-glorious Boast, dishonourable to God, and injurious to ourselves and others. It is indeed a Scandal to the Christian-Name, that all or any of the forementioned Impieties should be found among Gospel-Professors; and it is a high Aggravation of their Sin to go against the Light of their own Consciences in practising them. O how earnest should we be, in our Addresses to God for his Grace to enable us to submit to his commanding and disposing Will, and in bewailing our Iniquities and humbling ourselves before him for them! And what Encouragement have we, in this Way, to hope for his reviving Presence and Liftings-up! And if, in a Dependence on divine Strength, we resist the Temptations of the Devil, he will find us too hard for him, and flee, like a conquered Enemy, before us. But how cautious should we be never to imitate his Temper, and give him an Advantage over us, by slandering, censuring and condemning our Christian-Brethren for little Things, or Things that may be allowable in them! This is to set up for Judges, instead of Obeyers of the Law; and is a Violation of its Requirements to love them as ourselves; Yea, is an Invasion of God's Prerogative, who alone is able effectually to vindicate its Authority: O may it be unto our Salvation, and not to our Destruction!

CHAP. V.

The Apostle denounces the Judgments of God against the rich unbelieving Jews, *who defrauded the Poor, and lived in Luxury and Oppression,* 1—6. *Exhorts the Jewish Believers to Patience and Meekness under their Tribulations, which would soon have an End,* 7—11. *Cautions them against rash Swearing,* 12. *Recommends Prayer in afflicted, and Praise in prosperous Circumstances,* 13. *Prescribes Prayer and anointing with Oil for a miraculous Recovery of the Sick,* 14, 15. *Directs private Christians to mutual Confession of their Faults, and mutual Prayer,* 16—18. *And shews the Happiness of being instrumental to the Conversion of a Sinner,* 19, 20.

TEXT.	*PARAPHRASE.*
1 GO *to now, ye rich Men, weep, and howl for your Miseries that shall come upon* you.	1 COME now, ye carnal unbelieving *Jews* who abound in worldly Wealth, and neither have, nor desire a better Portion than the Things of this Life, Let me seriously and closely reason with you about the Evil and Danger of your Ways: Ye, of all others, have the greatest Cause for bitter Sorrow, even to Floods of Tears and howling Lamentation, which ye must soon be forced to go into, on account of the terrible Calamities of every Kind, that are ready to fall upon you, unless ye be brought to Repentance; and will overtake you wheresoever ye be scattered, and bereave you of all your earthly Enjoyments, and of Life itself, in the general Destruction of your Nation;* and will be followed with still more dreadful Miseries in an eternal Hell.
2 *Your Riches are corrupted, and your Garments are Moth-eaten.*	2. Your ill-gotten and ill-managed Treasures are canker'd at the Root; such of them as consist of Corn and other Fruits of the Earth, are hoarded up, till they rot and putrify, and bring Rottenness into your very Souls; and such as consist of your Wardrobes are laid by, 'till they be eaten up of Moths, and will stand you in no stead; but, like a gnawing Worm, will torment your Consciences for ever.
3 *Your Gold and Silver is cankered; and the Rust of them shall be a Witness against you, and shall eat your*	3. Your Abundance of Gold and Silver lies rusting in your Bags and Coffers, instead of being employed for the Glory of God and the Good of others; and will soon be as worthless and useless, as old rusty Iron, to your sore Disappointment and Vexation, and will not profit you in the

* The Apostle in this and the following Verses apparently points at the Days of sore Destruction, that were then soon to come upon the *Jewish* Nation, not only in *Judea*, but afterward with wider Extent through distant Countries, by the Ravages of the *Romans*, in the Way of God's righteous Judgments, for their obstinate Infidelity and other Iniquities. But as *that* was an awful Specimen of divine Wrath, which should be poured out upon them in the World to come, we may, with good Propriety, carry the View forward to the final Vengeance, that will be executed upon all impenitent Sinners at the great Day.

Flesh as it were Fire. Ye have heaped Treasure together for the last Days.

Day of Wrath; (*Prov.* xi. 4.) and the sinful Methods ye have taken to get and dispose of them will bring the worst of all Rusts upon them; will testify against you, as covetous Misers, that deserve the severest Indignation of the just and holy God; and the Guilt ye contract thereby will prey upon your Bodies, as well as Souls, in the fiery Desolation that will consume you in this World, and in the unquenchable Fire in the World to come. Ye have been laying up Goods in Store for many Years, with vain Hopes of finding Comfort in them at the latter Part of a long Life; but, in reality, it has been only heaping them up, as Spoils for your Enemies, in the Destruction of the *Jewish* Nation, and will ultimately prove to be a dreadful *treasuring up of Wrath against the Day of Wrath, and Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God*, &c. (Rom. ii. 5.)

4 *Behold, the Hire of the Labourers, who have reaped down your Fields, which is of you kept back by Fraud, crieth: And the Cries of them which have reaped, are entered into the Ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.*

4. Behold, with Horror and Astonishment, what all your Gains by griping and oppressive Means are come to! The just Wages of the poor Labourers, who have reap'd your Corn with the Sweat of their Brows, which ye have fraudulently with-holden, directly contrary to the Law of God, (*Lev.* xix. 13, and *Deut.* xxiv. 15.) is a crying Sin, which, like the Blood of *Abel*, calls aloud to Heaven for Justice to be shewn unto their Relief, and your Punishment: (*Exod.* xxii. 23, *Isa.* v. 7, and *Habak.* ii. 11.) And the mournful Complaints of those, who with Toil and Labour have gathered in your Harvest, are come up as a Memorial for them, and against you, before the Lord of Hosts, who hears their Cries, and whose Kingdom rules over all, to right the injured, and take Vengeance on their Oppressors.

5 *Ye have lived in Pleasure on the Earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your Hearts, as in a Day of Slaughter.*

5. Ye, like the rich Man in the Gospel, (*Luke* xvi. 19.) have fared sumptuously every Day, and indulged your luxurious Appetites, as if all Happiness lay in sensual Pleasures upon the Earth; and have gone into a merry and lascivious Course of Life: Ye have rioted upon the Bounties of Providence, with as much Gluttony and Profuseness, as though every Day were a Festival, in which many Beasts are slain for Sacrifices to be feasted upon with Jollity by the Offerers and their Friends. (*Prov.* vii. 14, and *Isa.* xxii. 13.) But in all this ye have been fattening yourselves, like Sheep for the Day of Slaughter, which is at hand, when *the Wicked shall perish, and the Enemies of the Lord shall be consum'd as the Fat of Lambs*, &c. (*Ps.* xxxvii. 20.)

6 *Ye have condemned* and *killed the Just*; and *he doth not resist you.*

6. Nay, over and above all this, ye, like those of your own Countrymen that procured the Condemnation and Death of the Lord Jesus, who is (τὸν δίκαιον) by Way of Eminence *the holy and just One*, (Acts iii. 14, and vii. 52.) have, under pretended Forms of Law, persecuted as many righteous Servants of his to Death, as ye could get into your Power: And ye have done this to the holy Professors of his Name, who, like him, never offered the least Violence to oppose or injure you. But God, who has hitherto exercised long Forbearance toward

ward you, will certainly espouse their Cause, and avenge the Quarrel of his Covenant upon you.

7 Be patient therefore, Brethren, unto the coming of the Lord: Behold, the Husbandman waiteth for the precious Fruit of the Earth, and hath long Patience for it, until he receive the early and latter Rain.

7. These are trying Dispensations of Providence to you, my Christian-Brethren; but God permits, and over-rules them for the Exercise and Improvement of your Faith and Patience. (*Chap.* i. 3, 4, and 1 *Pet.* i. 6, 7.) And therefore, tho' it be ever so unrighteous in your Enemies to bring Tribulations upon you, ye ought to bear them without murmuring at the holy Hand that God has in them, and with all Long-suffering, Meekness and Christian-Fortitude, till the Lord Jesus shall come to execute Judgment on the *Jewish* Nation, and deliver you out of their Power; or shall come by Death to rid you of all the Troubles of this Life, as he certainly will in his Time, how great or many soever they be. (*Psal.* xxxiv. 19.) Observe, for your Instruction and Imitation, that the Farmer, when he sowes his Seed, don't immediately expect a Crop, but quietly waits a great while for the proper Season of reaping the excellent Produce of the Earth; and continues with patient Hope for it, till, by the Blessing of Heaven, he be favoured with such early Rains, as may be needful for bringing up the Corn; and with such After-Rains, as shall bring it to Maturity, and plump the Ear for the Harvest.

8 Be ye also patient; stablish your Hearts: For the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

8. In like Manner, ye, waiting for heavenly Dews to fall upon you, ought to possess your Souls in Patience, till ye receive the happy Fruits of your Labours and Sufferings, and to maintain a sedate and settled Temper of Spirit, a stedfast Faith and holy Resolution for God and Godliness, under all present Difficulties. And ye need not wax weary and faint in your Minds, because ye have not yet received the Deliverance which ye hoped for; but may assuredly conclude that it will not be long before it be brought to you: For the signal coming of Christ, with Power and great Glory, to the Destruction of the unbelieving *Jews*, and the Deliverance of his People from all their cruel Persecutions, which he foretold; (*Luke* xxi. 21, 27) and the Time of your complete Redemption from all the Calamities of this Life hastens apace, and is near approaching.

9 Grudge not one against another, Brethren, lest ye be condemned: Behold, the Judge standeth before the Door.

9. Upon these comfortable Considerations, Take heed, my persecuted Brethren, of groaning out your Complaints, (μὴ στενάζετε) through Envy, Fretfulness and Desire of Revenge against those of your Nation, that oppress you; or against those of your professing Fellow-Christians, that are less obnoxious to their Rage, as too much favouring their darling Notions of a temporal Messiah; lest any of you be condemned for your impatient Murmurings and uncharitable Censures: For, behold, the Lord Jesus, the great Judge of all, is just at hand, as ready to *recompense Tribulation to those that trouble you*, his faithful Disciples; and to *give you Rest* from all your Grievances: (2 *Thess.* i. 6, 7) And therefore ye may calmly refer the Issues of all your Troubles to him,

in Confidence that he will ſoon appear for your Help, and ſave you.

10 *Take, my Brethren, the Prophets, who have ſpoken in the Name of the Lord, for an Example of ſuffering Affliction, and of Patience.*

10. To encourage you hereunto, Let me intreat you, my dear Chriſtian-Brethren, to reflect upon the Behaviour of the antient inſpired and holy Prophets under their ſore Trials, who were beloved of God, and faithfully delivered their Meſſages to the People in his Name, by Commiſſion from him; Let them be called to Mind, as noble Examples, for your Support in ſuffering Perſecutions, and for your Imitation in patiently enduring them with an intire Submiſſion to the Will of the Lord.

11 *Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the Patience of Job, and have ſeen the End of the Lord: That the Lord is very pitiful and of tender Mercy.*

11. Behold what Judgment we, who believe, make of the Afflictions of the Children of God, We are ſo far from thinking them miſerable, or out of Favour with him, on this Account, that we eſteem and call them happy Creatures, who are enabled to bear them with Reſignation, Faith and Patience; (*Chap.* i. 2, 3, 12) and ſo *are chaſtened of the Lord for their Profit, that they may be Partakers of his Holineſs, and afterward reap the peaceable Fruits of Righteouſneſs* from a ſanctified Uſe of them, (*Heb.* xii. 10, 11) and at laſt may be eternally ſaved. (*Matth.* x. 22.) To give you a remarkable Inſtance of this Sort, which ye, as converſant with the Writings of the Old Teſtament, cannot be ignorant of, Ye have, doubtleſs, heard of the patient Behaviour of *Job*, that dear and eminent Servant of the Lord, with what humble Submiſſion and becoming Acknowledgments of God, (*Job* i. 21, and ii. 10) he endured a Complication of the heavieſt Calamities, which Providence brought upon him for the Trial and exemplary Proof of his Integrity; and ye muſt needs have known what a gracious and happy Iſſue the Lord gave unto them all, in not only delivering him out of them; but alſo in manifeſting himſelf to him in an extraordinary Manner, with high Teſtimonies of his Approbation of him, and in reſtoring to him, with rich Advantage, double of all that he had loſt. (*Chap.* xlii.) Ye hereby evidently ſee that the Lord is (πολυσπλαγχνος) a God of infinitely abounding Compaſſion, and is (οἰκτίρμων) propenſe, like one whoſe Bowels of Love and Pity are moved within him, to ſhew the tendereſt Mercy to them that fear him, in upholding them under, and carrying them through, and giving them bleſſed Fruits of, all their Trials and Afflictions.

12 ***But above all Things, my Brethren, ſwear not, neither by Heaven, neither by the Earth, neither by any other Oath: But let your Yea be Yea; and*** your ***Nay, Nay; leſt ye fall into Condemnation.***

12. But there is one flagrant Sin, my dear Brethren, which the infidel *Jews* are abominably addicted to, and I would in a ſpecial Manner, and above all others that Men are apt to fall into, through an impatient Temper, warn you againſt, as exceeding affrontive, diſhonourable and provoking to the great God, and as every way unprofitable in itſelf, and utterly inconſiſtent with the Chriſtian-Character. What I mean is, that ye would never dare to go into raſh and impious Curſing and Swearing in a Paſſion, or in common Converſa-

versation *, by putting an Oath before all that ye say. Let no Provocation cause you to swear profanely; nor let any Oath be ever used unnecessarily, at all, either by Heaven, which is God's Throne, or by the Earth, which is his Footstool; (*Matth.* v. 34, 35) † or by any other Oath, which, whatever be pretended, is, in effect, swearing by the Creator of all Things, whether his Name be expresly mentioned, or not. But let your Conversation be so evidently dispassionate, honest and upright, that a plain Affirmation, or Denial, such as a bare *Yes*, or *No*, may be sufficient to gain an intire Credit to what ye say, lest ye fall under the Condemnation of such as *take God's Name in vain*; (Exod. xx. 7) or of being either false-hearted Professors, on one hand, or downright Infidels, on the other.

13 *Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is any merry? Let him sing Psalms.*

13. As to your Deportment in Adversity and Prosperity, If any of you be in afflicted Circumstances, which is often the Lot of God's own People, Let him betake himself to solemn and fervent Prayer for Relief: If, on the contrary, any of you be surrounded with the Blessings of Providence and Grace, to the Joy of his Heart, Let him give a sacred Vent to his grateful Sentiments, in cheerful Thanksgivings and Praises to the God of all his Mercies, which may be very suitably expressed, by singing forth the Honours of his gracious Name, in Psalms and spiritual Songs. These Duties, which are indeed to have their Turns through our whole Lives, are especially seasonable in those respective Situations.

14 *Is any sick among you? Let him call for the Elders of the Church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with Oil, in the Name of the Lord:*

14. If there be any one among you that labours under a bodily Distemper, which is supposed to be inflicted upon him for some remarkable Sin, (*ver.* 15 compared with 1 *Cor.* xi. 30, see the Note there) Let him desire the Officers of the Church, and especially such of them as are endued with miraculous Gifts, to come together; and let them pray with, or over him suitable to his Case, and lay their Hands upon him; (*Mark* xvi. 18) and, as a Sign of healing Virtue, anoint him with Oil in the Name, and by the Authority of the Lord Jesus, according to his Appointment, (*Mark* vi. 13. see the Note there) calling upon him to exert his

* The Words, render'd *above all Things* (πρὸ πάντων) literally signify *before* all; and may refer to the profane Custom of prefixing an Oath, in common Conversation, to all that is affirmed, or denied.

† The *Jews* of this Age were notoriously guilty of profane Swearing, though not always by explicitely mentioning the Name of *God*, yet by one or other of *his Creatures*, which they did not reckon to be binding upon them; but which our Lord told them was, in effect, swearing by the God himself who made them. (See the Note on *Matth.* v. 34.) And it seems to be with a special Reference to these Sorts of Oaths, as well as to all profane Swearing in common Conversation, that Christ there, and our Apostle here, so earnestly remonstrates against them. But this is no Argument against taking a solemn Oath before a Magistrate, or in a Court of Judicature, on important Occasions; provided it be only by the Name of *God*, according to his Command. (See *Deut.* vi. 13, and x. 20, and *Isa.* lxv. 16. and the Note on *Heb.* vi. 16.)

divine

divine Power for anſwering the Signal by an effectual Cure *.

15 *And the Prayer of Faith ſhall ſave the Sick, and the Lord ſhall raiſe him up; and if he have committed Sins, they ſhall be forgiven him.*

15. And the Prayer that is offered up by the Elders and the ſick Perſon, (*Mark* v. 34, and x. 52, and *Acts* xiv. 9, 10) with Faith in the Name of Chriſt, and with a particular extraordinary Dependence on his Power for a Performance of what is humbly aſk'd of him, ſhall be owned and ſucceeded in the Lord's delivering the Patient from Death, and recovering him to a State of Health and Strength: And if any particular Sins have been the immediate Occaſion of his Diſeaſe, they ſhall be forgiven him; in Token, or, at leaſt, as an Emblem of which, the Sickneſs ſhall be removed; and, through his own Faith in the Blood of Chriſt for the Remiſſion of them, they ſhall be pardoned as to the eternal, as well as temporal Puniſhment, which they had deſerved and expoſed him to.

16 *Confeſs* your *Faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent Prayer of a righteous Man availeth much.*

16. As to your brotherly Behaviour *in common*, Be ready on all Occaſions to acknowledge any Offences that ye have given one to another, according to our bleſſed Lord's own Direction; (*Matth.* v. 23, 24. See the Note there) or if there be any Sins that lie upon your Conſciences, under a Senſe of their being the Reaſon of God's contending with you in the Way of his Judgments, unboſom yourſelves in free and humble Confeſſions of them one to another, as Chriſtian-Brethren, that ye may ſympathize with, and know what to aſk of God for each other by Turns, as Occaſions require ‖; and according to the Knowledge ye have of one another's afflicted Circumſtances, Be earneſt in mutual Prayer for each other, that the Diſtreſſed among you, whether in Body or Mind, or both, may be healed of all their Maladies. (*Heb.* xii. 13, and 3 *John*, ver. 2.) And, for your Encouragement, Remember that the fervent in-wrought Prayer (ενεργουμενη) of a good and holy Man, who is himſelf

* *Anointing with Oil* was an Ordinance for the *miraculous* Cure of ſick Perſons. (*Mark* vi. 13.) But ſince thoſe *extraordinary* Gifts are ceaſed, as being no longer neceſſary for the Confirmation of the Goſpel, our Faith, in the common Courſe of Things, has now no Warrant for uſing that Ceremony: Much leſs doth what is here ſaid about it give any Countenance to the Papiſts Sacrament of *extreme Unction*, which they adminiſter, not with Oil only, but with Oil and Spittle; and *that*, not for the *Recovery of the Sick*, but for a pretended *Purgation from the Sins* of thoſe, that are in the very Article of Death, or paſt Hope of Recovery. (Vid. *Par.* in loc.)

‖ *Confeſs your Faults one to another, and pray one for another*, ſeem evidently to relate to the Duty, that is to be reciprocally exerciſed between *private Chriſtians*, in Diſtinction from what was ſaid, in the two preceding Verſes, about the Prayer of thoſe *Elders*, as moſt immediately intended, who were endued with *miraculous Gifts* of Healing. For the Apoſtle here ſpeaks of Believers in common, and of what they ought to do to, and for one another. (αλληλοις και υπερ αλληλων) And ſo here is no Foundation for *auricular Confeſſion to a Prieſt*; ſince what is here directed to, chiefly relates to Offences which one had committed againſt another, and is to be *mutual* and *reciprocal*, as the Words import; and therefore, if it were to be underſtood of the *People* and the *Prieſt*, it would oblige the Prieſt to confeſs his Faults to the People, as well as the People to the Prieſt, which would ſcarcely go down with the popiſh Advocates for this *prieſtly Prerogative*: And ſurely it is as much the Duty of the People to pray for their Miniſters, as of their Miniſters to pray for them; and the Prayer, which is ſaid to *avail much*, is called the Prayer, not of the *Elders*, but of the *righteous Man*, as ſuch.

ſanctified,

sanctified, and accepted of God in Christ as righteous, and so has an Interest at the Throne of Grace; the Prayer that is excited in him, and conducted and animated with a sacred Warmth of Soul, by the Spirit of Grace and Supplication to help his Infirmities, (*Zech.* xii. 10, and *Rom.* viii. 26.) has a wonderful Power with God, and prevails, as *Jacob's* did, when he wrestled for, and obtain'd the Blessing. (*Gen.* xxxii. 28)

17 Elias was a Man subject to like Passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: And it rained not on the Earth by the Space of Three Years and Six Months.

17. We have a memorable Example of the great Efficacy of believing and fervent Prayer in the Prophet *Elijah*, He was a frail mortal Man, of like natural and sinful Infirmities, and of like Sufferings and Passions with ourselves; and yet was remarkably heard and answered in the very Things which he pray'd for. At one Time, he, not in an angry Mood, or with a revengeful Spirit, but with great Engagedness of Heart and believing Importunity, begg'd of God that the Bottles of Heaven might be restrained, in a Way of Judgment, for the Rebuke and Conviction of King *Ahab* and the *Israelites*, who were fallen into Idolatry: (1 *Kings* xvi. 30—33, compared with *Chap.* xvii. 1.) And the Lord so fully answered his Prayer, that the Clouds of Heaven were shut up; insomuch that no Rain fell on the Land of *Israel*, for three Years and a Half together, by Means of which great Drought a sore Famine was brought upon the Earth (*Luke* iv. 25. See the Note there.)

18 And he prayed again, and the Heaven gave Rain, and the Earth brought forth her Fruit.

18. After this, in Mercy to the People that had been reclaim'd from their Idolatry, and in Confirmation of their Faith in the God of *Israel*, (1 *Kings* xviii. 39—45.) *Elijah* offered up his earnest Prayer again for the Return of plentiful and seasonable Showers; and it pleased God in a wonderful Manner to answer him, by sending an exceeding great Quantity of Rain from the Clouds of Heaven to revive the Face of the Earth, which thereupon yielded its Fruits with rich Increase. And God is still, as much as ever, a *God, who hears Prayer*, and never said to the spiritual *Seed of* Jacob, *seek ye me in vain.* (Ps. lxv. 2, and *Isa.* xlv. 19.)

19 Brethren, if any of you do err from the Truth, and one convert him;

19. To conclude this Epistle, in which I have remonstrated against the Sins, that abound among the unbelieving *Jews*, and have been too prevalent in some of you, my Brethren, who make a Profession of Christ's Name, Whosoever he be among you, that through Infidelity, or Backsliding and Apostacy, runs astray from Christ, and from the Truth of the Gospel, in Principle and Practice, by Errors in Doctrine and Immorality of Life; and any one of you, in your respective Stations, be instrumental in turning him from his erroneous Notions, and from his Iniquity to God;

20 Let him know, that he which converteth the Sinner from the Error of his Way,

20. Let such an Instrument of Good consider the Importance of this happy Change; and when his Endeavours are rendered effectual, by divine Grace, to produce it, he ought to rejoice and bless God, in this Reflection, that he who is

shall save a Soul from Death, and shall hide a Multitude of Sins.

so highly honoured, as to be the Means of a Sinner's Conversion, or of a Backslider's Recovery, from the erroneous Thoughts, Dispositions and Courses of his Life, to God in Christ, will be the Means of saving an immortal Soul from spiritual Death and eternal Destruction; and of leading him into the Way of Life and Peace, in which all his multiplied Transgressions shall be covered from the Eye of avenging Justice, by the Righteousness of the Redeemer, *which is unto, and upon all that believe, without Difference*; (Rom. iii. 22,) and, by his Conversion, many Sins will be prevented, which otherwise would have been committed by him, and by others, through his bad Example and Influence, and would have appeared in open Light at the Day of Judgment.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a Snare are the Riches of this World to a covetous and carnal Mind! They are often got and misused with much Guilt, and bring upon their Owners the most distressing and aggravated Sorrows. The Cries of the Injured and Defrauded, and of the Persecuted unto Death, go up to the Lord of Hosts, calling aloud for righteous Vengeance to come down upon their Oppressors and Murderers; and what these spend in Pomp and Luxury, or unduely hoard up, will be a swift Witness against them, and add to their Stock of Wrath against the Day of Wrath in the final Judgment.—O what Abundance of Patience do the Saints need in such a wicked and miserable World as this! But what Encouragement have they to exercise it, since Christ will soon appear to reckon with all their Enemies, and to deliver themselves out of all their Troubles! They may learn the great Lesson of Patient-waiting for the Salvation of the Lord, from the Husbandman, who waits with long Patience for the Harvest; from the antient Prophets, who, though dear to God, suffered many Tribulations, and were patient under them; and from the eminent Example of *Job*, who, though sorely afflicted for a while, calmly submitted to the Divine Will, and had wonderful Experience, at last, of the tender Mercy and Compassion of God, which gloriously crowned all. How inconsistent is it with the Christian-Character to swear by God, or any of his Creatures, or any petty Oaths, in a Passion, or in common Conversation! And how becoming, to behave with such apparent Integrity at all Times, as shall engage a firm Dependence on the Truth of his bare Affirmation, or Denial! How prayerful should he be in Affliction, and how full of Praise in Prosperity! And if the Lord, in the Way of his righteous Judgment, lay any Disease upon him for some particular Sins, He should desire the Prayers of the Officers and private Members of the Church, as the ordinary Means, that God in the present State of Things, in which miraculous Gifts of healing are ceased, will own and bless for his Recovery, whenever, upon the Whole, it may be for the best: For the believing fervent Prayer of a righteous Man, that is animated by the Holy Spirit, has great Power with God to obtain whatever is most for his Glory and agreeable to his Will. An eminent Instance of this we have in the Answers, which were given to the Prayers of *Elias*, a Man of like human and sinful Passions with ourselves, for shutting and opening the Bottles of Heaven. But how becoming is it for Christians, in special Cases of Offence given to their Brethren, or of Burden upon their Spirits, or of divine Rebuke, to make frank and open Confessions of their Faults to each other, that they may the better sympathise with, and know how to order their Prayers for one another! And since there are so great Numbers of notorious Sinners and Apostates, that run astray in Principle and Practice from the Truth and Holiness of the Gospel, How encouraging is it, for Ministers and private Christians too, to do what in them lies for their Conversion; and what an Honour and Pleasure, to be instrumental thereunto! Since he who is the Means of turning any Transgressor from the Evil of his Ways to God, through Christ, contributes, in a subordinate Manner, to the saving of an immortal Soul from eternal Misery, and to the preventing of many Sins, and hiding others from the Eye of God's avenging Justice!

A PRAC-

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF THE First Epiſtle General of the Apoſtle *PETER*.

In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The PREFACE to the Firſt Epiſtle of *PETER*.

THE Apoſtle *Peter*, as he himſelf tells us, was the Penman of this, and the Second Epiſtle that bear his Name. And they are moſt probably ſuppoſed to have been wrote, the *Firſt* either about the Year of our Lord 65 or 66, and the *Second* a Year or two afterwards; not long before the Apoſtle's Martyrdom at *Rome*. (See Dr. *Whitby*'s Preface for confuting the popiſh Pretence, as though the *Firſt* were written about the Year 44, or 45.)

The Inſcription of this Epiſtle directs it to *the Strangers ſcattered throughout* Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Aſia *and* Bithynia, which ſeems to be much of the ſame Import with the Inſcription of the Apoſtle *James*'s general Epiſtle to *the twelve Tribes, which were ſcattered abroad*, though the Tribes of *Iſrael* are not expreſſed in this Inſcription, as they are in that.

However, the Introduction to Mr. *Peirce*'s Paraphraſe and Notes on the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, and Dr. *Benſon*'s Hiſtory of St. *Peter* &c, would maintain that *both* the Epiſtles of *Peter* were wrote rather to the *Gentile*, than *Jewiſh* Chriſtians, who were ſcattered in the various Provinces above-mentioned. But as all their Reaſonings and Criticiſms are, in my Account, far from being concluſive; and as canvaſſing them might not be much to the Edification of the common Chriſtian, for whoſe Uſe my Paraphraſe and Notes are moſt immediately intended, I ſhall not trouble him with them: And, perhaps, they may in good Meaſure be anſwered, by only ſuppoſing, (as I think we naturally may) that the Apoſtle *principally* deſigned ſuch *Jewiſh* Converts, as were ſcattered throughout thoſe Countries, though not to the Excluſion of ſuch *Gentile*-Believers, as were mingled with them; in like Manner as the Apoſtle *Paul* wrote to the *Gentile*-Chriſtians, though

 not

not to the Exclusion of *Jewish* Believers, in most of his Epistles to particular Churches.

Several Considerations incline me to think, that our Apostle had chiefly a Respect to *Jewish* Converts in both his Epistles: For *Peter* was, in a peculiar Manner, the Apostle of the *Circumcision*; and therefore it seems highly improbable, and out of Character, to suppose that the *only Epistles* he wrote were to *Gentile*, and not *Jewish* Converts; and our Thoughts are led to these by several Hints in the Epistles themselves. He considers them as Persons who were redeemed from their vain Conversation, *received by Tradition from their Fathers*, (Chap. i. 18) which the *Jews* had been most notoriously and criminally fond of. (See *Matth.* xv. 2, 3, *Mark* vii. 3, 8, 9, and *Gal.* i. 14.) The Apostle also speaks of *believing Women*, as the Daughters of *Sarah*; (Chap. iii. 6) which could not be said with just Propriety of any, but her Descendents; since *the Covenant*, by which *Gentile*-Believers come to be the Children of *Abraham*, was made immediately and expresly with *him*, and not with *Sarah* his Wife: The Apostle's Discourse about political and relative Duties, in the second and third Chapters, seems to have been occasioned by *Jewish* Prejudices against being subject to *Heathen* Magistrates and Masters: His *beseeching them to have their Conversation honest among the* Gentiles (Chap. ii 11, 12) carries an Intimation of their being a distinct People from them: The *Judgment* which should *begin at the House of God*, and was just then at hand, (*Chap.* iv. 17) evidently relates to the Destruction of the *Jews* and their Temple, which most nearly concerned those of that Nation. And, in his *second* Epistle, he speaks of *always putting them in Remembrance, as long as he was in this Tabernacle, and of endeavouring that they might always have them in Remembrance after his Decease*; (Chap. i. 12—15) which may point us to his ordinary personal Ministrations, as well as to his writing these Epistles, and best agrees to his Office-Character and Work, as the Apostle of *the Circumcision*. And his *stirring up their pure Minds, by way of Remembrance, that they might be mindful of the Words, which were spoken before by the holy Prophets*, (Chap. iii. 1, 2) intimates that they had been before conversant with those Words. It may also be very likely, that what he mentions of his *beloved Brother* Paul'*s having written to them*, (ver. 15) refers to his Epistle to the *Hebrews*.

Upon the whole then, as I apprehend, we may abide by the common Opinion, that *both* these Epistles were written *mostly*, at least, for the Use of *Jewish* professing Believers in Christ, who were dispersed through the several Places abovementioned in the Inscription of the *first* of them.

The Design of the Apostle in this *first Epistle* was to establish those Converts in the Faith of Christ, as their Foundation; and to comfort them under severe Persecutions; (*Chap.* i. and ii. 1—8) to engage them to an honourable, conscientious and winning Behaviour among the *Gentiles*, and particularly to a faithful Discharge of all the Duties of their Civil and Family-Relations; (*Chap.* ii. 9 ad fin. and iii. 1—7) and to an Exercise of all the Duties of brotherly Love among themselves, and of their respective Stations in the Church; concluding with a Prayer, that the God of all Grace would in, and after all their terrible Sufferings, strengthen and settle them in their Faith and Hope; and that they all might have Peace in Christ Jesus. (*Chap.* iii. 8, to the End of the Epistle.)

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

The Apostle salutes the professing Believers, to whom he wrote; and blesses God for his special Benefits to them through Jesus Christ, in which they rejoiced under all Tribulations, 1—9. *shews that Salvation by Christ was foretold in antient Prophecy,* 10—12. *and exhorts them to all holy Conversation, suitable to their Principles, Privileges and Obligations,* 13—25.

TEXT.

1. *PETER an Apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,*

2 *Elect according to the Fore-knowledge of God the Father, through Sanctification of the Spirit unto Obedience, and sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus Christ. Grace unto you, and Peace be multiplied.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. *PETER*, who, by the immediate Appointment and Commission of the Lord Jesus Christ, was constituted an Apostle principally of the Circumcision, (*Gal.* ii. 8.) sends this Epistle, under divine Inspiration, chiefly to the professing Christians of *Jewish* Extract, who are, not only in a metaphorical Seuse, but, *properly speaking*, Strangers in foreign Countries; as being expelled from their own Land, and dispersed, by the Providence of God, in the various *Gentile* contiguous Provinces of *Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia*, the proconsular *Asia*, and *Bithynia*. †

2. Who notwithstanding their former Revolt as a Nation, from the God of *Israel*, and from his Covenant made with their Fathers, appear, in the Judgment of Charity, by the Tokens of his Grace upon them in their effectual Calling, to be the Objects of his special and eternal Choice, according to the kind distinguishing Notice, which God the Father took of them before all Worlds, (See the Note on *Rom.* viii. 29.) with a gracious Design of bringing them to eternal Life, through the renewing and purifying Operations of his Spirit on their Souls, to engage and enable them to yield themselves up unto all holy Obedience to his Commandments in Heart and Life; (*Eph.* i. 4. See the Paraphrase and Notes there) and to bring them under an Application of the atoning Blood of Christ, for the Remission of their Sins, which was typified by the sprinkling of the Blood of Sacrifices under the Law, and, in

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† All these Countries, as the best Geographers think, lay in what was called the lesser *Asia*, which was contained in, and spoken of by Way of Distinction from, the large Continent that bore the Name of *Asia*, in the three grand Divisions of the then known World, *Africa* having been discovered in later Ages; and therefore the *Asia* here meant, and distinguished from *Pontus, Galatia*, &c. must be that, which was sometimes called the *Roman*-Proconsular *Asia*, and at others, *Asia* proper. And the *Strangers scattered abroad throughout* these Provinces seem to be meant of those of the Tribes of *Israel*, that did not retnrn from the Captivity to their own Land, but sojourn'd in those Countries, rather than of those that were dispersed by the Persecution spoken of in *Acts*, viii. 1. For these were scatter'd only throughout *Judea* and *Samaria*; though afterwards some of them travelled as far as *Phenice*, and *Cyprus*, and *Antioch*, preaching the Word to none but unto the *Jews* only, *Act.* xi. 19. But all these Countries were far distant from those, into which these Strangers are said to have been scatter'd. (Consult *Wells*'s Geography of the New Testament.)

that Allusion, is fitly called *the Blood of Sprinkling.* (Heb. xii. 24.) May the free Favour of God with all its genuine Fruits and Effects, in their utmost Variety, Manifestations and Fulness; and all Prosperity, spiritual and temporal, as consisting of Peace with God, and Peace in your own Consciences, and with one another and all around you, and every other comfortable Circumstance, be abundantly increased towards, and in you!

3 *Blessed* be *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant Mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively Hope, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead.*

3. When I reflect on the great and blessed Things, which God has already done for us, whom he has chosen, redeemed and called, my Heart is filled with Gratitude, Joy and Praise; and ye ought to join with me in cheerful Ascriptions of all possible Glory and Thanksgivings to God, even the Father, who with respect to *the human Nature* of Christ is *his God*; and with respect to *his divine Nature* is, in a Way of Peculiarity and Eminence, *his Father*; and with respect to his *Office-Capacity* is *the Covenant-God and Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom he has raised up and anointed to be the Prophet, Priest and King, and so the complete and only Saviour, of every one of us who truly believe in him. Adored and for ever magnified be his glorious Name, who, not according to our Deserts, but according to the wonderful Riches and Multitude of his free and sovereign Mercy, in which he chose us, has now begotten us a-new by his regenerating Spirit, to a joyful Hope, which springs from a lively Faith, and revives the Heart, has spiritual Life and Vigour in it, and has for its Object a Resurrection to eternal Life, and shall certainly issue in it, through the quickning Power and Virtue of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and through Faith in him, who, by his Sufferings unto Death, has satisfied divine Justice for our Sins, and by his rising again from the Dead for our Justification, is publickly owned and acquitted by God the Father, *that our Faith and Hope might be in God* through him. *(ver. 21.)*

4 *To an Inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you,*

4. Blessed be his Name who has given us a new and spiritual Birth, whereby we are rendered capable of and fitted for, as well as entitled by gracious Adoption to, a noble Inheritance, as the Portion, answerable to the Dignity, of his Sons; (*Rom.* viii. 17.) An Inheritance, not of a perishing Nature, as all the Riches, Honours and Pleasures of this World are; nor an earthly Inheritance, like that of the Land of *Canaan*, from which the *Jews* of the Dispersion are driven away; but an Inheritance which will make a rich Amends for the Loss of *that*, and of all temporal Possessions: An everlasting immortal Inheritance, altogether pure and holy, incapable of being itself defiled, or of being enjoyed by polluted Souls, or of defiling any that are Partakers of it; and never decaying in its Worth, Sweetness or Beauty; but always fresh, entertaining and delightful: A glorious Inheritance consisting of the sub-

limest

limest and most refined Enjoyments which never fade, like the Garlands of Herbs and Flowers with which Conquerors use to be crown'd; and is an Inheritance securely laid up, and kept safe in Heaven, by the immutable Purpose and Promise of God, and by the meritorious and efficacious Mediation of Christ, as a precious inexhaustible Treasure for all and every one of you that are begotten to it.

5 *Who are kept by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation, ready to be revealed in the last Time.*

5. Who, though weak in yourselves, and exposed to innumerable Temptations and Dangers which would be too hard for you, were ye left to your own Wisdom and Strength to combat with them, are guarded and preserved, as in a Garrison, (φρουρουμένους) by the Almighty Power of the great God himself, which is engaged for your Preservation and Safety against all your Enemies, through a daily Exercise of Faith in its Dependence on Christ, and realizing Views of future Glory, to animate you in your Christian-Course of Obedience, and make you victorious over Sin, Satan and the World, (*Eph.* vi. 16, and 1 *Joh.* iii. 9, and 5. 4.) till ye arrive at complete Salvation; which Salvation is already *prepared for you*, in the Design of God, *from the Foundation of the World*, (Matth. xxv. 34.) and by the Purchase and Advocacy of Christ, who, as your Head and Forerunner, has taken Possession of it for you; and which will soon be manifested in all its Riches and Delights, when he shall appear to judge the World, at the last Day, and *ye shall appear with him in Glory:* (Col. iii. 3, 4.) And so ye are as safely kept for this Inheritance, as the Inheritance itself is for you.

6 *Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a Season (if need be) ye are in Heaviness through manifold Temptations.*

6. In the believing View and Hope of all this, ye well may, as I trust ye do, exceedingly rejoice, (as ye shall still more abundantly hereafter) even to an Exultation, (ἀγαλλιᾶσθε) though at present, in this imperfect State of Weakness, Sin and Sorrow, ye for a litte while (if God sees it needful for his Glory and your own Good) are grieviously, and yet comparatively speaking, but *lightly*, afflicted, through a great Variety of Trials from Satan and the World, and from your own Infirmities and Frailties, which ye are now attended with, and are permitted to be so:

7 *That the Trial of your Faith being much more precious than of Gold that perisheth, though it be tried with Fire, might be found unto Praise, and Honour, and Glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:*

7. To the End that (ἵνα) the Experiment and Proof (δοκίμιον See the Note on *Jam.* i. 3.) of your genuine Faith in Christ, which is abundantly more to its Advantage and Honour, than the Trial of Gold can be to it, as *this*, how much soever it be refin'd from its Dross by the Fire, is of a perishing Nature still, and may be worn away by Use, and lose some of its Particles in the very Trial of it; Whereas true Faith is improved and encreased, and made to shine the brighter, by the Blessing of God upon its Trials, that it may evidently discover itself with such Purity and Eminence, as shall be to its highest Commendation, and shall be openly approv'd of God, and graciously rewarded with Honour and Glory, as its Fruit and

Consequence; and as shall ultimately redound to his most glorious Praise; when Jesus Christ, *the Author and Finisher of your Faith*, (Heb. xii. 2.) shall be revealed to crown his own Work in you, at his second Appearing to your complete Salvation: And then it shall be found, that *these light Afflictions, which are but for a Moment, work for you a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory* (2 *Cor.* iv. 17.)

8 *Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see* him *not, yet believing, ye rejoice with Joy unspeakable, and full of Glory:*

8. Though ye, who are far distant from *Judea*, never saw Christ with your bodily Eyes; yet through the Revelation which has been made of him to, and in your Souls, by his Word and Spirit, ye have a sincere Desire after him, Affection to him, Esteem of him, and Delight in him; in whom, though at present he be out of the Reach of your corporal Sight, and ye neither see him, as many did in the Days of his Flesh on Earth, and as ye yourselves will in his State of Exaltation hereafter; yet while ye realize and appropriate him by Faith, and trust in him as your only Saviour, ye rejoice in him, and in Hope of his Glory, even unto a Rapture and Triumph, with a Joy so sublime, heavenly and satisfying, as surpasses the Powers of Language to express; a Joy, which is glorious in itself, and attended with all glorying in him; and is indeed a lively Foretaste and Earnest of the Glory, with which ye shall hereafter be glorified with him. (ἀγαλλιᾶσθε χαρᾷ ἀνεκλαλήτῳ καὶ δεδοξασμένῃ)

9 *Receiving the End of your Faith,* even *the* Salvation *of* your *Souls.*

9. When ye, like Conquerors in the public Games, shall receive as a Reward of Grace, (τέλος) the Perfection and ultimate Aim of your Faith, and the End, which it terminates and issues in, even the complete Deliverance of your Souls, which are the principal Part of the Man, and the Salvation of which will draw after it *that* of your Bodies too, from all Sin, Want and Misery; and the Advancement of your whole Persons to all the Felicity and Glory of the heavenly State.

10 *Of which Salvation the Prophets have enquired, and searched diligently, who prophesied of the Grace* that should come *unto you:*

10. Which glorious and and blessed Salvation, as to be brought about, and clearly reveal'd in the Messiah's Days, was foretold by the antient inspired Prophets, who were earnestly inquisitive, and exceeding diligent, like Miners digging for precious Oar, (ἐξηρεύνησαν) in their Searches after the Meaning of their own Prophecies, when they spoke many Ages ago, concerning the rich, and eminent Blessings of Light and Grace, Pardon, Purity and Peace, Hope, and Joy, which ye shou'd be Partakers of, with clear Evidence of your own Interest in them.

11 *Searching what, or what Manner of Time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified before-hand*

11. They being very solicitous, as *Daniel* was, by studying the sacred Writings, (*Dan.* ix. 2.) to find out, to what Purpose, and with a Reference to what Period of Time, and what shou'd be the particular Signs, by which it might be known, as also whether it shou'd be in Days of preceding Purity or Vice, Light or Darkness, or of outward

the Sufferings of Christ, and the Glory that should follow.

ward Peace or Trouble to the Church, that the Things shou'd come to pass, which the Spirit of Christ whom he imparted to them, and who guided and acted in them, intimated, when he bore Witness, long before-hand in their Prophecies, to the Things, that related to the extremely painful and abasing Sufferings of the Messiah, in Soul and Body, unto Death, by which he shou'd be cut off for the Transgressions of his People, and make Reconciliation for their Iniquities; (*Isa.* liii. 8, and *Dan.* ix. 24, 26.) and that related to the Glories (δόξας) of his Resurrection, Ascension and Exaltation, and the Effusion of his Spirit; and to the Glory of the Gospel-State, and, at length, of all his Members with him, and in Conformity to him, which shou'd be the Effect and Consequence of his atoning Sacrifice, and shou'd abide for ever afterwards. *

12 *Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the Things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven; which things the Angels desire to look into.*

12. Unto which holy Prophets it was made known, by the Suggestion of the Spirit, that their Predictions were not to be fulfilled in their Days, but in After-Times; and that, though their own Souls were refresh'd, and their Faith, together with the Faith of the Godly in those Ages, was supported by them; yet that they did not therein so much serve themselves, or the then present Generation, as they did us, who live under the New Testament-Dispensation, and are favoured with its important Blessings; which are now openly proclaimed, and faithfully declared to you, in the glad Tidings of Salvation, by them who have published the Gospel of the Grace of God to you in all its Light, Liberty and Glory; which has been divinely confirmed by the attending Testimony and Communication of the Holy Spirit, in his Gifts and Graces, as sent down from the exalted Saviour in Heaven, according to his Promise; (*Joh.* xiv. 26, and xv. 26, and xvi. 7, and *Acts* Chap. ii.) which Gospel unfolds Things so excellent, profound and entertaining, that the holy Angels themselves, those bright and happy Intelligences, are exceeding desirous, like Students greedy of further Improvement in the best of all Knowledge, to make critical and close Enquiries into the manifold Wisdom of God that is displayed in them; which was emblematically represented by the Cherubim that were placed over the Ark and Mercy-Seat (*Exod.* xxv. 20.) in a stooping Posture, (παρακύψαι) as though they wou'd ac-

* *The Spirit of Christ's testifying the Sufferings of Christ, and the Glory that shou'd follow*, and his *revealing* to the Prophets, that the Testimony related to future Ages, were the Actions of a *divine Person*, distinct from him, whose Spirit he is, and whose Sufferings and Glory he testified: And his being call'd *the Spirit of Christ*, when he *before-hand* gave this Testimony, shews that he as really existed, and was *the Spirit of Christ* then, as when Christ after his Ascension sent him, (*Joh.* xvi. 7.) and the Father sent him in his Name; (*Chap.* xiv. 26.) and that therefore he was properly *the Spirit of Christ*, or *of the Son*, (Gal. 4. 6.) as well as of the Father, prior to, and independent of their sending him, in Consequence of Christ's Sufferings and Exaltation, and not merely on Account of that Mission.

curately pry into the Things which were contained therein, and signified thereby. (See the Note on *Heb.* ix. 5.)

13 Wherefore gird up the Loins of your Mind, be sober, and hope to the End, for the Grace that is to be brought unto you at the Revelation of Jesus Christ:

13. Having therefore these Revelations and Encouragements, with respect to future and eternal Blessedness, Take heed of waxing weary and faint in your Minds: But as Persons are wont to gird up the long Garments, which are worn in Eastern Countries, about their Loins, to strengthen them for Service, and prevent Entanglements or Incumbrances, in travelling, running, fighting, or any other Exercises; and as the *Israelites* were to have their Loins girded at the Passover, when they were setting out from *Egypt* for the Land of *Canaan*; (Exod. xii. 11.) So let it be your continual Endeavour, by divine Assistance, to gather your loose Thoughts and Affections together; to get rid of the Cares and Incumbrances of this Life; to moderate your Appetites to, and make a temperate Use of, the Things of this World, with holy Vigilance, (νηφοντες) like Servants that wait for the Coming of their Lord. (*Luke* xii. 35—37.) And be careful to maintain a sincere, unshaken, growing and persevering Trust and Hope in Christ, (τελειως ελπισατε) to the End of your Days, Temptations and Conflicts, with joyful Confidence and assured Expectation of all the Bliss and Glory of the heavenly State, which is merely the Gift of God's free Favour, (*Rom.* vi. 23.) and is the Perfection of the begun Work of Grace in you here; and which shall be brought into your complete and actual Possession, when the Lord Jesus *shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels; and shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe.* (2 Thess. i. 7, 10.)

14 As obedient Children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former Lusts, in your Ignorance.

14. Behave then suitable to your spiritual, high and noble Birth, Privileges and Hopes, as dutiful Children, intirely subject to the Authority and Commandments, and Submissive to the Will of your heavenly Father in all Things: And take heed of falling in with, (μη συσχηματιζομενοι) or being conformed to the corrupt Inclinations and Desires, S[illegible], Principles, Practices, Language and Fashions of the Men of this World, and particularly of this degenerate Age, as formerly, while ye were Strangers to Christ and the Gospel, and were involved in Darkness and Error, under the Power and Dominion of *fleshly Lusts, which war against the Soul*, (Chap. ii. 11.)

15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all Manner of Conversation;

15. But as God is essentially and perfectly holy, who has called you by his Grace to the Faith and Fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ, that ye might be a holy People to him; so ye ought, as far as possible, to imitate and resemble him in the Purity and Sanctity of your Hearts, and of your whole Lives and Conversation, at all Times, in every Circumstance of Prosperity and Adversity, and in every Relation in which ye stand toward God and one another, and towards all Men, whether Friends or Enemies, Saints or Sinners. This ye are obliged unto by a divine Command;

16. Because

16 *Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.*

16. Because God says now to you, as he often did to his antient Covenant-People, the *Jews*, as recorded in the Writings of the Old Testament, (*Lev.* xi. 44, and xix. 2, and xx. 26.) I demand that ye be a holy People unto me, after my own Heart and Likeness: For I, the Lord your God and Father, am a holy God, *of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity* without the utmost Detestation of it. (*Habak.* i. 13.)

17 *And if ye call on the Father, who without Respect of Persons judgeth according to every Man's Work, pass the Time of your sojourning here in Fear:*

17. And if, answerable to your holy Profession, ye from your very Hearts call God your Father in Christ, and invoke him in his Name, and pay all religious Homage to him, who without any partial Respect of Persons, on account of their earthly Ancestors, or external Relations and Privileges, judges concerning them, and passes Sentence upon them in his Word, and will do so *in Righteousness by Jesus Christ* at the last Day, (*Acts* xvii. 31, and *Rom.* ii. 16.) according to what every one's Works now are, and shall then be found to be, whether Good or Evil, in Proof of their being his *obedient Children*, (ver. 14.) or not. These solemn Considerations of God should excite and engage you to an humble and awful Reverence of him, and Fear of offending him; together with a godly Jealousy over your own Hearts, and Fear of being left to yourselves, for the little Time that ye may be here in a State of Pilgrimage, passing on through this World, as Strangers upon Earth, to your own better Country and Inheritance in Heaven, to which ye are begotten, (*ver.* iii. 4.) and which God has prepared for you. (*Heb.* xi. 9, 10, 13, 16.)

18 *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible Things, as Silver and Gold, from your vain Conversation* received *by Tradition from your Fathers;*

18. And ye ought to be the more strongly induced, and encouraged to go on in this holy Conversation and religious Fear; since ye, as true Believers, must needs be assured, that your Redemption and Recovery from all the corrupt, empty, defiling and destructive Manners and Customs, which in the Days of your Sin and Folly ye were brought up in, and went into, as handed down from Age to Age by the Traditions of your Rabbies and Ancestors, and as taught and practised by your immediate Fathers after the Flesh; ye, I say, can't be ignorant, that your Deliverance from all this, and from its dreadful Consequences, was not purchased by so mean a Price as the perishing Riches of this World, such as the Silver and Gold which are paid for buying poor Captives out of Bondage, Misery and Slavery among Men:

19 *But with the precious Blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without Blemish, and without Spot:*

19 But ye know that it was by no less a Price, than the noble and invaluably precious Blood, Sufferings and Death of the Son of God, as the anointed Saviour, who *through the eternal Spirit offered himself without Spot unto God*, (Heb. ix. 14.) as an atoning Sacrifice of a sweet smelling Savour, (*Eph.* v. 2.) perfectly holy, and free from all original or actual Defilement, Flaw or Defect, as was typified by the Paschal Lamb, and the Lambs which were offered as daily Sacrifices every Morning and Evening, under the Law, and

were to be without any Kind of Blemish, (*Exod.* xii. 5, and *Numb.* xxviii. 3, 4, 9.) that they might the better prefigure this immaculate and eminent Lamb of God:

20 Who verily was fore-ordained before the Foundation of the World, but was manifest in these last Times for you;

20. Who was most certainly intended to be the only true propitiatory Sacrifice, long before those legal Shadows of him were instituted; yea, who was originally appointed of God hereunto in his eternal Decree, before the Foundation of the Earth was laid; but it was in the Fulness of Time, that he was sent into our Nature and World, (*Gal.* iv. 4.) and so was manifested in the Flesh, to redeem them that were under the Law; and in these concluding Days of the *Jewish* Age, and in the Beginning of this last Dispensation of God's Grace to the Church, he was clearly made known, and demonstrated to be the great and only Redeemer of lost Sinners, which he really is, and is now openly declared to be, for your eternal Salvation;

21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the Dead, and gave him Glory, that your Faith and Hope might be in God.

21. Who through him, as the only Mediator, trust and hope in God, as a reconciled God and Father, who, in Testimony of his being thoroughly appeased by the Blood of Christ, raised up his crucified Body from the Grave, and exalted him in human Nature to the highest Honour, Authority and Dominion at his own Right Hand, that ye, encouraged by this unquestionable Evidence of his being the true and accepted Messiah, and of his having finished the Work which his Father gave him to do upon Earth, might place your intire Dependence and Confidence in God, thro' him, for all the Blessings ye need here, and for a Resurrection to eternal Life and Glory hereafter; ye therein relying upon God, as a God of Peace and Father of Mercies to you on his Account.

22 Seeing ye have purified your Souls in obeying the Truth through the Spirit, unto unfeigned Love of the Brethren; see that ye *love one another with a pure Heart fervently:*

22. Since ye have been enabled to mortify and subdue the Power of those Corruptions, which formerly defiled your Souls, and to become holy in Heart and Life, (*ver.* 14, 15.) by the Obedience of Faith, according to the Command of God, and the Truth of the Gospel, (See *Rom.* xvi. 25, 26, and 1 *John* iii. 23.) through the powerful Operation of the divine Spirit, who has wrought this happy and holy Change in you; and since, being thus *sanctified through the Truth*, (John xvii. 17.) ye are brought to a sincere, undissembled and hearty Affection to your Christian-Brethren, as such, Let it be your daily conscientious Care to cultivate this brotherly Love, yet more and more, towards one another, not merely in Word, but in Truth, with all its substantial Fruits and genuine Effects, and with the intense Fervour of a Heart purified by Faith, and by regenerating Grace:

23 Being born again, not of corruptible Seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever.

23. Ye being, as I trust, really Partakers of a new and spiritual Birth, which doth not proceed from mortal Seed, like your natural Birth, nor from a corrupt Principle, which produces only corruptible Effects, like what the carnal *Jews* received, with all its external Privileges, by Descent, as the natural Seed of *Abraham*; but is a supernatural, spiritual

spiritual and immortal Birth; ye being begotten by Means of the Word of Truth, (*Jam.* i. 18.) which is incorruptible in itself, and in its vital Production, and which, under the Influence of the Divine Spirit, is of quickening Efficacy, and, like its Author, remains unchangeably the same in its own Nature, and in its immortal Virtue for ever; and so brings forth a nobler Birth, than can be derived from the most famous Ancestors upon Earth.

24 *For all Flesh* is *as Grass, and all the Glory of Man, as the Flower of Grass. The Grass withereth, and the Flower thereof falleth away:*

24. For all fleshly Descent, with its fairest Fruits, may properly be compared to the green Grass or Herb of the Field; (*Isa.* xl. 6, 7.) and all the natural and acquired Endowments of Man, as Man, and external Privileges of any Man, in his present State of Degeneracy, and all the Ornaments of Nature and Art, as well as the Honours of Pedigree, which carnal Minds pride themselves in, and the *Jews* boast of in their Relation to *Abraham*: All this may be likened to the gay and beautiful Flower which the Grass bears in its Verdure; it all soon fades and dies away, like blighted and withering Grass, together with its most showy and admired Adornings, that sicken and drop off, like the Flowers of the Field, when the Wind passes over it, and it is gone. (*Ps.* ciii. 15, 16.)

25 *But the Word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you.*

25. But so incomparably more excellent is the Word of the Lord, (*Isa.* xl. 8.) and the spiritual Birth produced by it, that it always abides the same in its own Nature and Effects, as *the Seed* which *remains* in true Believers; (1 *John* iii. 9.) and is ever living and enlivening without Decay of its Virtue, and will be effectual to make them happy for ever. And this is no other than that divinely inspired Word, which contains the glad Tidings of Salvation by Jesus Christ, and is communicated to you in the Promulgation of the Gospel by his ministring Servants, and rendered efficacious in the Renovation of the whole Man, by the blessed Spirit, unto eternal Life.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a beautiful and harmonious Concurrence is there in the Election of the Father, the Redemption of the Son, and the Sanctification of the Spirit, for producing Faith and holy Obedience here, in order to complete Salvation hereafter! Blessed be God, that wherever his Grace takes Effect upon any of us, we are new born to a happy and glorious Immortality; and our Souls are purified by the Obedience of Faith, unto a sincere Love of the Brethren, through the Spirit, by Means of the Gospel, which has a quickening Virtue, and ever lives in its Efficacy to maintain the Principle of spiritual Life, till it be perfected in Life eternal: We are therein begotten as the Children of God, according to his rich and abounding Mercy, to a living Hope of Heaven, through the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead, and to an Enjoyment, in due Time, of that glorious Inheritance, which is incorruptible, free from all Impurity, and eternally abiding and entertaining, without Decay: And as this is made ready and reserved in Heaven for us; so we are safely kept by the Power of God, through Faith, to that Salvation, which shall be revealed in all its Fulness, Grace and Glory at the last Day, for which we believe in an unseen Jesus. O delightful Prospect and Security to all that are born of God! How transcendent to the perishing Honours an Advantages of this Life, which fade

 and

and die, like the Grass and Flower of the Field! With what Transport may their Faith triumph in Christ amidst all the various momentary Afflictions, which God sees to be needful for them, that their Faith being exercised, proved and improved, by Means of those fiery Trials, to better Purpose than Gold tried in the Fire, may shine with the brighter Honour and Glory at the final appearing of Jesus Christ!—What a solid Foundation for our Faith have we in him, who was appointed of God from all Eternity to be his Salvation; was foretold by the antient Prophets; and is now more clearly revealed in the Gospel! He came in the Fulness of Time to redeem his People from all the Sin and Ruin of the Fall, and of traditional Corruptions, not with Silver and Gold, but with his own precious Blood, as of a Lamb without Blemish; and his Father raised him from the Dead, and exalted him in our Nature to the highest Authority and Dignity, that our Faith and Hope might be emboldened to fix on God, as our reconciled God and Father through him. How surprising and important are these Things! The holy Angels closely study them; and we ought to do so too, as being more nearly concerned in them.—How affectionately should we love the once suffering and now exalted Saviour, and all our Christian-Brethren for his Sake! How holy ought we to be in Obedience to the Commands, and in Imitation of our heavenly Father, who, as an impartial Judge, has no Respect of Persons, but will pass a final Sentence of Happiness, or Misery, by Jesus Christ, upon the whole World, according to the different Kinds and Degrees of their Works! With what godly Fear should we reverence him all the Days of our Lives! And how should we behave with Vigilance and Sobriety as Pilgrims and Strangers, who no longer fall in with the corrupt Manners of this World, as in the Time of our Unregeneracy; but travel through it to our heavenly Home, and maintain a stedfast Hope to the End of Life, that he, who has begun the good Work in us, will finish it in eternal Glory! May Grace and Peace be abundantly multiplied to all such!

CHAP. II.

The Apostle recommends a Temper suitable to their Character, as born again, and a daily Recourse to Christ as their only Foundation, 1—10. *Directs their holy Conversation among the Gentiles,* 11, 12. *Exhorts Subjects and Servants to pay all proper Obedience to their civil Governors and Masters,* 13—18. *And to be patient, in Imitation of their suffering Saviour, under all Hardships that might be wrongfully laid upon them,* 19—25.

TEXT.

1 *WHerefore laying aside all Malice, and all Guile, and Hypocrisies, and Envies, and all Evil-speakings,*

PARAPHRASE.

1. SINCE therefore ye are Partakers of a new and spiritual Birth, whereby ye are formed for Purity and brotherly Love, (*Chap.* i. 22, 23.) ye ought to put off, cast away and utterly abhor (as ye would old rotten and filthy Garments that are unfit to be worn) all Manner of Wickedness or Naughtiness, (πασαν κακιαν. See *Jam.* i. 21.) and particularly all malicious, spiteful and revengeful Heart-burnings, Designs and Practices against your Fellow-Christians, or any one whatsoever; together with all Frauds, deceitful Flatteries and insincere Compliments; and all hypocritical Professions of Religion toward God, and of Respect, Love and Friendship to others; as also all envious Grudging and Repining at their Prosperity; and all Backbitings, Defamations and detracting Words, which proceed either from a guileful, or malicious, or envious Disposition of the Heart.

2. And

2 *As new born Babes desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby:*

2. And as all these defiling and pernicious Evils are to be intirely abandoned; so, as new-born Infants long after the Mother's Milk, ye, under a feeling Sense of your Wants, ought to have eager Appetites for, and earnest Desires after the pure, uncorrupted Word of God, (λογικον αδολον) as containing proper Food and Nourishment for rational and immortal Souls, that ye may grow in Knowledge and Grace, Comfort and Holiness, and in all spiritual Strength and Stature unto a perfect Man in Christ, (*Eph.* iv. 13.) by Means of that very Word of the Gospel, by which ye were regenerated, and *which lives and abides for ever.* (Chap. i. 23.)

3 *If so be ye have tasted that the Lord* is *gracious.*

3. Ye not only ought to have, but ye certainly will have an utter Aversion to all Sin, and an Appetite to the good Word of God, (*ver.* 1, 2.) in case ye have really had, as I hope, an experimental Acquaintance with, and a true Relish and Savour of, the Mercy and Grace of the Lord Jesus to your own Souls, though it be but as a Taste, in Comparison with what ye shall hereafter enjoy in, and from him.

4 *To whom coming,* as unto *a living Stone, disallowed indeed of Men, but chosen of God,* and *precious,*

4. To whom ye are to be daily applying by Faith for all further Edification, Support and Establishment, as unto the only Foundation of all your Security, Hope and Happiness; which, in Allusion to the Foundation of the Temple, in which the *Jews* glory, may be compared, not only to a *Stone* for Solidity and Strength, Firmness and Duration; but, by Way of Eminence, to *a living Stone**, as he has Life in himself, and communicates quickening Influence, and ever lives to animate all that are united to him, and built upon him: He is indeed despised and rejected, as by the *Jewish* Rulers, (*Luke* xx. 17.) so by all carnal *Jews*, and Unbelievers, who *see no Form, Comeliness or Beauty in him to desire him,* (Isa. liii. 2.) and *will not come to him, that they might have Life:* (John v. 40.) But he was chosen of God, and appointed to be the Foundation of his Church from all Eternity; (*Chap.* i. 20.) and is most excellent in himself, dear and honourable in the Sight of God his Father, (who has highly exalted him) and in the Esteem of all that believe in him, (*ver.* 7.) as completely able to bear the whole Weight of God's Glory, and the Salvation of his Church, which he has laid upon him.

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* *A living Stone* in the *literal* Sense may be thought an inconsistent Idea. But as this and several other Expressions in the following Verse are evidently *metaphorical*, and designed to signify *Christ* as a *spiritual* Foundation, and his *Members* as the *Building* erected upon it, in Allusion and Preference to the Temple at *Jerusalem*, which the *Jews* look'd upon as their highest Glory; there is a striking Beauty, Vigour and Emphasis in the Language, and no more Impropriety in Christ's being spoken of as *a living Stone*, than as *living Bread*, and *a living Way*, (John vi. 51. and Heb. x. 20.) to shew his Excellence above all other Bread, or Ways. And the Apostle *Peter*'s speaking of him, under the Metaphor of *a living Stone*, shews that he did not account *himself*, but *Christ only*, to be the *Foundation-Stone* of the Church.

5. And

5 Ye also as lively Stones are built up a spiritual House, an holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual Sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

5. And ye, thus coming to him, are, as it were, living Stones, (ὡς λίθοι ζῶντες) as being spiritually alive by Derivation from him, in Virtue of your Union with him, who is your living and enlivening Foundation; and are erected and edified in the noblest Manner upon him, being *built together for a Habitation of God through the Spirit*; (Eph. ii. 22) all the Parts of which Building are of a spiritual Nature, such as God delights to dwell in after a more gracious and beneficial Manner, than he ever did in the Temple, which was built of the most beautiful Stones: *(Luke* xxi. 5.) Ye are also become more excellent Priests to God, than those under the Law, to bring and present, not ceremonial and typical Sacrifices, like them, much less atoning Sacrifices, like *that* of our Lord; but spiritual Offerings of Self-Dedication, Prayer and Praise, Alms-Deeds, and all Sort of Fruits of Righteousness, *(Rom.* xii. 1, *Phil.* i. 11, and *Heb.* xiii. 15, 16) which are well-pleasing to God, and graciously accepted of him, through, and on Account of the propitiatory Sacrifice and Intercession of Christ, the only Mediator, who has reconciled you to God, introduces you to him, and renders both your Persons and Services acceptable in his Sight.

6 Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief Corner-Stone, elect, precious: And he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

6. Accordingly, we have a Testimony of the following Purport concerning Christ, as it is contained in the prophetic Writings of the Old Testament, *(Isa.* xxviii. 16) Observe, says God, with Attention and holy Admiration, Faith and Hope, Love and Joy, I, the sovereign Lord of all, have of my own mere good Pleasure appointed and provided, fitted, prepared, and placed the Messiah in my Church *, as a sure Foundation and chief Corner-Stone, which has been tried and proved, and found effectual, to unite *Jews* and *Gentiles*, the Old and New Testament-Church, and cement all the Members of *both* firmly and compactly together; and to add Strength and Beauty to them; a Stone, which I, in infinite Wisdom and Grace, have chosen for this Purpose; which is excellent and honourable in itself, and exceeding dear to me. And whosoever he be, whether *Jew* or *Gentile*, a greater or lesser Sinner, that depends intirely on Christ, or builds by Faith on him, as his sure and only Foundation, shall never be ashamed to own him, or be confounded by any of his Enemies for professing his Name; nor shall he ever be ashamed or confounded, through any Disappointment of his Hope in Christ, as they are, who inconsiderately build on a sandy Foundation, and whose vain Confidences

* *In Sion* may likewise possibly refer to *Jerusalem*, which is often called *Sion*, and *Mount-Sion* in the *Psalms* and the *Prophets*: And so God's *laying this chief Corner-Stone in Sion* may point to *the Place*, where our Lord finished the Work of Redemption; where the glad Tidings of Salvation by him were first published, and from thence spread abroad; *(Ps.* cx. 2, and *Isa.* ii. 3) and where the first Gospel-Church was erected on this Foundation. *(Acts* ii. 41—47) But as *Sion* and *Mount-Sion* are very commonly used for God's Church and People in the Old Testament, and in *Heb.* xii. 22, I have rather chose to give the Paraphrase in that Sense, as most agreeable to the Current of the Context.

are defeated, through rash and precipitate Measures, and Over-Haste to accomplish them: (See the Note on *Rom.* ix. 33.) But he shall *have Boldness in the Day of Judgment,* (1 *John* iv. 17) as one discharged from Guilt and Condemnation, and made perfect in Holiness and Happiness, through the Redeemer's Righteousness.

7 *Unto you therefore which believe,* he is *precious: But unto them which be disobedient, the Stone which the Builders disallowed, the same is made the Head of the Corner.*

7. He therefore is a high Honour, (τιμη) and can't but be of high Esteem and Indearment, to you who believe in him, and build all your Hopes intirely upon him; he in his Person, Offices and Benefits, and in his Relation to you, is altogether lovely in your Account, and is, and for ever will be your Crown and Glory, honouring you, and honoured by you: But to them who, being disobedient to God and him, and to his Word, set him at nought, and reject him by Unbelief, this very Stone, which the *Jewish* Rulers, who pretended to be, and ought to have been, the Builders of the Church of *Israel,* would not receive, but disapproved of, as the Foundation of the Gospel-Church, according to a prophetic Account of him and them; (*Ps.* cxviii. 22) Even he is by the Ordination and Settlement of God, notwithstanding all their Spite and Rage against him, the Foundation, chief Corner-Stone, Strength and Glory of his spiritual House.

8 *And a Stone of Stumbling, and a Rock of Offence,* even to them *which stumble at the Word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed.*

8. And at the same Time, according to another Prophecy, (*Isa.* viii. 14) he is become, like a Stone that lies in Mens Way, at which they stumble and fall to their Hurt, and like a Rock, which they rashly dash themselves against, to their Destruction; he is so to them, who are offended at the Doctrine of the Gospel, which sets him forth, as the only Foundation that God has laid, and besides which no other can be laid, to answer its End; (1 *Cor.* iii. 11) they being obstinately unbelieving and refractory, to which God, in his holy Sovereignty and righteous Judgment, purposed to leave them, as to the free Choice of their own perverse Hearts; and, for which, he determined that this Stone should fall, and his Justice should be glorified, on them, to their utter Ruin. (See the Note on *Rom.* ix. 18.)

9 *But ye* are *a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People; that ye should shew forth the Praises of him who hath called you out of Darkness into his marvellous Light:*

9. But ye, who are built upon Christ, as your Foundation, are, in the best and most valuable Sense, Partakers of all the Blessings, that were signified by the external Privileges and national Honours of the visible Church of *Israel:* (Exod. xix. 6, and Deut. vii. 6) Ye are a new-born Generation and Kindred (γενος) of spiritual and noble Birth, whom God has set apart for himself by eternal Choice, and effectual Calling: Ye have an Unction from the Holy One, and are *Kings and Priests unto God,* (Rev. i. 6) as, like *Princes,* ye have Power with him, and Victory over Sin, Satan and the World, together with a holy Dominion over your own Spirits, and are Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven; and as, like *Priests,* ye are separated from the rest of the World, and consecrated to God for offering spiritual Sacrifices acceptable

ceptable to him by Jesus Christ: (*ver.* 5.) Ye are also a holy Society formed into one spiritual Body, like a Nation collected together, under Christ your Lord and King, sanctified by his Spirit, governed by his Laws, and embarked in the same common Cause and Interest: And ye are a purchased and special Property to him, that, suitable to your Dignities, Privileges, Blessings and Obligations, ye might both really and intentionally display the Glory of divine Virtues and Perfections, such as the infinite Wisdom and Power, Holiness, Justice, Goodness and Truth of God; and might shew forth, in Word and Deed, his Honour and Praise, who has called you by his Grace, and delivered you from the Darkness of Ignorance and Error, Sin and Misery, in which ye were formerly involved; and has brought you into the most wonderful and affecting Light of Truth and Grace, Holiness and Comfort, which he has caused to shine in your Hearts: (2 *Cor.* iv. 6.)

10 *Which in Time past* were *not a People, but* are *now the People of God: Which had not obtained Mercy, but now have obtained Mercy.*

10. Who, for Ages past, have been disowned of God, and divorced from his visible Covenant; (*Jer.* iii. 8, and *Hos.* i. 6, 9) but now by the Grace of the Gospel, through Jesus Christ, are brought into the sweet and abiding Relation of a Covenant-People to him; and who, during all those former Ages, were shut out from the distinguishing Effects of his special Mercy, but have now found Mercy with him, unto the Renovation of Nature, the Forgiveness of Sins, and Justification of Life, according to *Hosea*'s Prophecy. (*Chap.* ii. 23.) And this, in a higher Sense, may be said of those *Gentiles* among you, who are now brought to the Faith of Christ, and so become the spiritual Seed of *Abraham*. (See the Note on *Rom.* ix. 25.)

11 *Dearly Beloved, I beseech* you *as Strangers and Pilgrims, abstain from fleshly Lusts, which war against the Soul;*

11. In Consideration therefore of these distinguishing Favours, which God has bestowed upon you, my dear Brethren, whom he has *formed for himself, that ye might shew forth his Praise,* (Isa. xliii. 21) I earnestly intreat, and exhort you (παρακαλω) to look upon yourselves as Pilgrims and Strangers upon Earth, who are travelling onward to a better Country; (*Heb.* xi. 13, 16) and I beseech you, as such, to renounce and keep clear of all those inward Workings of sensual Inclinations, inordinate Affections and Desires after earthly Things, which arise from the Corruption of Nature, and exert themselves by the Body; and are contrary to the Liberty, Peace and Honour, Purity and Holiness of your renew'd Souls; and, as the worst of all Enemies, are engaged in a perpetual War against them, and do their utmost to defile, disturb, ensnare and destroy them.

12 *Having your Conversation honest among the Gentiles: That whereas they speak against you as Evil-doers, they may*

12. Take heed that the Whole of your Behaviour towards, and under the Observation of, the unconverted *Gentiles*, among whom ye live, be decent, honourable, and commendable for its amiable Bauty, (καλην) every Way worthy of your holy Profession; to the End that, whereas they seek all Occasions to reproach you, on Account of your Profession

of

by your *good Works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the Day of Visitation.*

of Christ, and to speak against you, as though ye were a refractory, useless and mischievous Sort of People, and Practisers of Iniquity, they may be effectually confuted by your regular, blameless, holy, benevolent and lovely Deportment in every Relation of Life, by means of which, they, as Eye-witnesses of it, may be induced to think well of you and of your Religion, and may be themselves brought to glorify God, by admiring his Grace in you, and by imitating your good Conversation in Christ, when they come narrowly to inspect into it, and when he shall look upon them and visit them in his Mercy, (*Luke* i. 68) and shall set his Gospel home with Light and Power upon their Hearts; and so render it effectual to their own Salvation.

13 *Submit yourselves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's Sake:* Whether it be to the King, as Supreme;*

14 *Or unto Governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the Punishment of Evil-doers, and for the Praise of them that do well.*

13, 14. In order hereunto, Let me guard you against some Things, that give Occasions of great Offence to your Enemies, as for Instance, How strong soever the Prejudices of some of you may be, through *Jewish* Notions, against obeying Heathen-Magistrates, Remember, that as the *Theocracy*, or that divine Form of Government, in which God was the King of *Israel*, is expired, it is now your Duty, as Christians, to be subject, in all Matters of a *civil* Nature, to every secular Power, which is legally set over you by the Appointment and Consent of the Community; which, on that Account, may be called the *Ordinance of Man*; and yet is the *Ordinance of God*, as he has appointed and order'd it for the Good of human Society, and by his Providence directs and inclines Bodies of People to set up such a Form of it, as they apprehend to be best for the Preservation of all their civil and religious Rights, Liberties, Privileges and Properties, and for their Protection and Safety in an Enjoyment of them: (See the Notes on *Rom.* xiii. 1, 2.) And ye ought to submit yourselves to its Rulers in Obedience to the Command of the Lord Christ, (*Matth.* xxii. 21) and for the Honour of his Name, that it may not be evil spoken of, as though he were the Author of a Religion which subverts the Laws and Rights of civil Society. Ye therefore should think yourselves obliged, in Conscience, to pay cheerful Obedience in all lawful Things to Unbelievers, as well as others, that hold the Reins of Government where ye live, according to their political Character and Authority; whether to the Sovereign, such as a King or Emperor, like the *Roman-Cesar*; or to subordinate Magistrates, like the Governors of Provinces, and inferior Officers, as those that are deputed by him, and act under his Commission, in the several Parts of his Dominion, to execute the just Laws of the Country, according to the Ends, for which God has appointed their Authority; as particularly, for inflicting deserved Punishment upon those that are immoral and profane, disobedient to the just Laws of Government, injurious to the Lives and Properties of others, and Disturbers of the public Peace; and for protecting, encouraging, favouring and re-

warding those, who behave as becomes faithful Subjects, and are orderly, sober, honest and benevolent in their Stations. (*Rom.* xiii. 3—5.)

15 *For so is the Will of God, that with Well-doing ye may put to Silence the Ignorance of foolish Men:*

15. For it is the declared Will and Command of God, and well-pleasing in his Sight, that, by a regular and commendable Course of Life, ye disprove, and stop the Mouth of unreasonable and wicked Calumnies, which Men of weak and prejudiced Minds, who are Strangers to God, and to your true Character, would raise against you and your Religion, as if it made you bad Subjects.

16 *As free, and not using* your *Liberty for a Cloke of Maliciousness, but as the Servants of God.*

16. It is his Will, that ye conduct in such a Manner as becomes those, who, as his free Men, are indeed delivered from the Tyranny of Sin and Satan, and from the ceremonial Yoke, and the Curse of the moral Law; and are free from all Obligations to submit to Impositions upon Conscience by any Authority of Men: And he requires, that ye never turn this Liberty into Licentiousness; nor make Pretences of asserting it, as a Cover to Sedition and Wickedness, (τῆς κακίας) or any malignant Evil whatsoever; but that ye use it only for such good Purposes, as God approves of in them that are his *Servants*, as well as Free-Men; and are bound to do every Thing in Obedience to him, as your supreme Lord and King, who has the highest Demands upon you, and enjoins the Duty ye owe to him, and to others, according to his Will.

17 *Honour all* Men. *Love the Brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the King.*

17. Under this Conviction therefore, See that ye esteem, and pay a suitable Respect, on every Occasion, to all ye have to do with, according to their several Ranks and Stations, whether they be High or Low, Rich or Poor, Christians or Heathens, as far as any commendable Thing appears in them. Entertain and express the most affectionate Love to your believing Brethren of all Denominations, as Members of Christ, and of the Houshold of Faith together with yourselves. Do every Thing with a religious, filial and reverential Fear of God and of offending him, like true Worshippers of him, who always act with a Conscience void of Offence toward God and toward Men. Upon this Principle, and as far as is consistent with it, Behave as loyal Subjects in paying all civil Homage and Respect to the Person and Office of the chief Ruler, as such, whom God in his Providence has invested with regal Dignity and Authority over you, even though, like *Nero* the present Emperor, he be a Heathen-Prince and inveterate Enemy to Christianity.

18 *Servants, be subject to* your *Masters with all Fear, not only to the Good and Gentle, but also to the Froward.*

18. As to those of you who are (οἰκέται) Houshold-Servants of every Rank, whether Slaves or not, that may be perswaded to think yourselves no longer obliged to pay Obedience to unbelieving Masters, It certainly is your Duty to be humbly submissive to their lawful Orders, with a becoming Reverence of them, whatever be their religious Character; and to serve them with Fidelity, and Fear of offending them, and of offending God by Disobedience to

their just Commands. (*Col.* iii. 22.) This Duty is to be paid, not only to such Masters, as are generous, kind, meek and merciful in their Temper and Behaviour; but even to those also, who are austere and morose in their Carriage to their Servants, especially if it be only because they are Christians.

19 *For this is thank-worthy, if a Man for Conscience toward God endure Grief, suffering wrongfully.*

19. For it is Matter of Praise, and savours of a gracious Spirit, and is (χαρις) a free Gift of God, and acceptable to him, if any one, for the Sake of his Religion, and from a Conscience toward God, patiently and quietly suffers abusive, grievous and injurious Treatment, without any just Provocation given by him, or any Fault of his own.

20 *For what Glory is it, when ye be buffeted for your Faults, ye shall take it patiently? But if when ye do well, and suffer* for it, *ye take it patiently, this* is *acceptable with God.*

20. For what Honour to Christ, or to yourselves; or what Room for Commendation can there be, If, when ye have been guilty of any Neglect, Unfaithfulness, or Misdemeanor, ye are severely beaten for it according to your Deserts, and are forced to submit to it, as the Fruit and due Reward of your own Evil-doings? There can be no Credit to Religion, or to you in this: Your Crime makes such Sufferings a Reproach, instead of an Honour, both to God and yourselves. But if when ye perform the Duties of your Places with Diligence and Fidelity, and are conscientious in your religious Devotions, and are chastised for it, and bear it all with humble Patience and Submission; this is an excellent and holy Temper, which God freely gives, and is highly pleased with. (χαρις.)

21 *For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an Example, that ye should follow his Steps:*

21. For when ye became Christians, ye were called to submit, even with Patience and Meekness, to Injuries and Reproaches for Christ and the Gospel's Sake; because our Lord Jesus himself willingly underwent the greatest Sufferings and Revilings, in his Love and Kindness to us *, and particularly to you, for your Advantage, and indeed in your Room and Stead; and therein, among still higher Designs of his Death, (See *ver.* 24, and *Chap.* iii. 18) left you a most perfect Pattern of Patience in Sufferings, to the End that ye, in Love, Duty and Honour to him, might tread in his Steps, as exactly as possible, by imitating him in this, and in the whole of his blameless Behaviour.

22 *Who did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth:*

22. Who, notwithstanding all the false and malicious Accusations of his Enemies, never was guilty of the least Fault in any one Act of his Life, but was *holy, harmless, undefiled, seperate from Sinners,* and *went about doing Good:* (Heb. vii. 26, and *Act.* x. 38.) Nor was there ever found the least Insincerity, Deceit or Falshood in his Words, or Doctrine; nor could the worst of his Adversaries ever prove any Thing of that Kind upon him: But in the

* Those Copies, that read (ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν — ὑμῖν) *for you — leaving you* an Example, seem best to comport with the Structure of the Sentence; since *ye were called — that ye should follow his Steps* are expressed by Verbs of *the second Person plural,* (ἐκλήθητε, — ἵνα ἐπακολουθήσητε.)

 most

most eminent Sense, (answerable to *Levi*'his Type) *the Law of Truth was in his Mouth*; *and Iniquity was not found in his Lips*: (Malac. ii. 6.)

23 Who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself *to him that judgeth righteously*:

23. Who when he was shamefully reproached, as a Blasphemer, an Impostor, and one possessed of a diabolical Spirit, and was contemptuously spit upon, and derided under the Mock-Title of a King, never returned the least opprobrious Language upon his insolent and impious Adversaries: When he suffered the utmost Indignities and Barbarities in the Judgment-Hall and at his Death, he never discovered the least Impatience nor threatned to avenge himself, as he justly might, and easily could, upon his Persecutors; but meekly and calmly referred himself and his Cause to his heavenly Father; trusting in him to give righteous Judgment between himself and his Crucifiers; and at the same Time praying that, instead of avenging their Wickedness in murdering him, he would graciously forgive them, through his atoning Blood: (See *Isa*. liii. 7, and *Luke* xxiii. 34.)

24 Who his own self bare our Sins in his own Body on the Tree, that we being dead to Sin, should live unto Righteousness: by whose Stripes ye were healed.

24. Who, being sinless in himself, not only left a matchless Example of Patience in his Sufferings; but cheerfully submitted to them with a still much more important and endearing View, as he freely became our Surety and Substitute, to answer for our Sins, and to bear the Punishment, that in Law and Justice was due for them, which *he put away by the Sacrifice of himself*, (Heb. 9. 26.) when his Body was lifted up on the Cross in the greatest Extremity of Torture, and his *Soul*, which was also made *an Offering for Sin*, (Isa. liii. 10.) *was exceeding sorrowful even unto Death*; (Matth. xxvi. 38.) to the End that, by the Merit, and in Virtue of his Sufferings, we being freed from the Dominion, as well as from the Guilt of Sin, like Persons dead to it, might live in all holy Obedience, and bring forth Fruits of Righteousness to God through him: (*Rom*. vi. 2, 6, 11, 13.) By whose Wounds, which were made upon his Body by Scourgings and Piercings, unto the drawing of Blood, we in the Application of this sovereign Balm, through Faith in him, are cured of the worst of all Wounds and Maladies which Sin had made upon us; Wounds beyond all Comparison worse than any Sores that can be made upon your Bodies, who are Servants and even Slaves, by the severest Stripes that the most cruel Masters can lay upon you. This therefore should throughly reconcile you to them, and quiet and comfort you under them.

25 For ye were as Sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your Souls.

25. For ye, while left to yourselves in your unconverted State, were, like wandering Sheep, even the lost Sheep of the House of *Israel*, running astray from God, from his Fold, Ordinances and Commandments; and running from the Ways of Truth, Righteousness and Peace, into every sinful and dangerous Path that leads to eternal Destruction;

But

But now, through the enlightning and renewing Operations of the Spirit, by Means of the Gospel, (ἐπεστράφητε) ye are turned back from the Error of your Ways to Christ, that *great Shepherd of the Sheep*, (Heb. xiii. 20.) and kind Observer, Visiter and Inspecter, or Overseer of your precious and immortal Souls, that he, taking a tender Care of you as his Charge, may feed and nourish, guide and govern, heal and defend you from all Evil, and conduct you safe to Glory.

RECOLLECTIONS.

No Mother's-Milk can be more eagerly desired, or better relished by hungry Infants, than the pure unadulterated Word of God is by new born Souls, for their spiritual Nourishment, who have tasted that the Lord is gracious. And O how precious is Christ to them, who as living Stones are built upon him as their living Foundation, which God has chosen, and laid with high Approbation in his Church! They shall never be ashamed of their Faith and Hope in him, and Profession of him, how much soever others may despise, reject and stumble at him to their own Destruction, through the wilful Disobedience, to which God justly determined to leave them, and for which to punish them. But how great are the Privileges and Blessings of true Believers! Though they were once Strangers to God, and wandering in the Paths that take hold on Hell, they have now found Mercy with him, who has chosen and called them out of miserable Darkness into astonishing and joyful Light; and has made them a holy and peculiar People, yea, Kings, and Priests to offer up spiritual Sacrifices to God with Acceptance through Jesus Christ. He has bore their Sins on the Cross, and taken them away by the Sacrifice of himself; has healed their spiritual Maladies by being wounded for them; and has reduced them to himself by his Grace, that they may be under his Inspection and Care, as the great Shepherd and Overseer of their Souls. How strong and endearing then are their Obligations and Encouragements to be continually coming by Faith to him; to abandon all malignant Thoughts and Words, and all sensual Appetites that war against the Purity, Peace and Happiness of the Soul; to behave as Pilgrims and Strangers on the Earth; to die to Sin and live to Righteousness; and to order the whole of their Conversation in such an honourable Manner, as may silence Gainsayers, and recommend Religion to them, and be the Means of inducing them to glorify God, when he shall visit them with his Grace! How should this laudable Behaviour run through all Relations of Life, upon Principles of Conscience, and for Christ's Sake, that the Liberty, wherewith he has made his Disciples free, may not be turned into a Yoke for Licentiousness! They ought to be dutifully subject to the Laws of civil Government, and to supreme and subordinate Rulers, who are appointed of God for the Preservation of Liberty and Property, and of the public Peace, by suitable Rewards and Punishments. Due Respect should be shown to all Ranks of Mankind, and especially to Christian-Brethren, in the Fear of the Lord. And Servants particularly ought to be obedient in all lawful Things to their Masters of every Character, and to be careful that they never be guilty of any Fault to bring them under Corrections, which would turn to their own Shame. But if, through the morose and wicked Tempers of their Masters, they be scourged for Righteousness Sake, and patiently endure it; This, as to themselves, is acceptable to God, and what they, as Christians, are called to. And O what a complete and animating Example of Well-doing, and of Patience in Sufferings, has our crucified Lord set them, and all of us who believe in him, that we might tread in his Steps! He was intirely sinless, free from all Deceit; and never returned opprobrious Language, or impatient Threats, for the most infamous and cruel Abuses; but left himself and his Cause with God, trusting in him for all Events. And how should we be excited to bear our sorest Trials with a like meek and humble Spirit; since our Iniquities have deserved them at the Hand of God, if not of Men; and since, by the Sufferings of Christ in our Stead, the principal End of which was to make Atonement for Sin, our spiritual Wounds are healed, which are every Way worse than any that can be made upon our Bodies by the utmost Severity of Men!

CHAP. III.

The Apostle proceeds to recommend the Duties of Wives and Husbands, 1—7. *Exhorts all Christians to mutual Agreement in Principle, Affection and Kindness,* 8—13. *And encourages them to Patience under Persecutions for Righteousness Sake, in Consideration of Christ's having patiently suffered in their Stead, and of the rich Advantage they have thereby,* 14—22.

TEXT.

1 LIKEWISE, *ye Wives*, be *in Subjection to your own Husbands; that if any obey not the Word, they also may without the Word be won by the Conversation of the Wives,*

PARAPHRASE.

1. HAVING dispatched what relates to the Duties of Christian-Subjects and Servants, Let us in like Manner go on to those of the conjugal Relation, beginning with what is incumbent upon *believing Wives*; and to such I must say Whatever Difference there be, as to Religion, between you and your lawful Husbands, whom ye may have married before ye yourselves were converted, ye ought to behave with an obliging and affectionate Submission to them in all reasonable Things of a temporal Concern, to the End that, if any of them pay no Regard to the Word of God, which is the ordinary Means of Conversion, they, though not attending on its Ministrations, may be allured and gained over to a good Esteem of it, and of Christ and his Ways according to it, by the manifest Appearance of its powerful Influence to produce an exemplary, meek and humble, sweet and engaging Temper and Carriage in those of you who are Wives; ye ought, I say, thus to behave, in Hope that this, by the Blessing of God, may be the Means of bringing them under the Hearing of the Word, and so of saving their Souls; (1 *Cor.* vii. 16.)

2 *While they behold your chaste Conversation* coupled *with Fear.*

2. While they are daily Eye-Witnesses of, and observe and reflect upon, the Purity, Sobriety, Chastity and Modesty of all your Deportment with due Respect to them and Fear of offending them; and as doing every Thing in the Fear of God, with a religious Reverence of him, and in Obedience to his Commands.

3 *Whose adorning, let it not be that outward* adorning *of plaiting the* Hair, *and of wearing of Gold, or of putting-on of Apparel:*

3. Let it be the Study and Endeavour of such godly Women to recommend themselves and their Christian Profession to their Husbands, not by the external Ornaments of Dress, which (how lawful soever in itself according to their Stations,) too many of that Sex are apt to pride themselves in, as though it were their chief Adorning; such as putting their Hair into fine Plaits and Curls; and wearing Gold-Rings, Bracelets or Chains; or Garments embroidered with Gold; or decking themselves with any such sort of rich and splendid Attire, as leud and light Women use, for tempting and ensnaring the Hearts of the Unwary (See the Note on 1 *Tim.* ii. 9.)

4 *But* let it be *the hidden Man of the*

4. But let it be their principal Care, in Preference to all other Ways of Women's setting themselves off, to excel in the inward

Heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the Ornament *of a meek and quiet Spirit, which is in the Sight of God of great Price.*

inward Adornings of Knowledge, Virtue and Truth, Grace and Holiness, which, like the *new Man*, (Eph. iv. 24.) is seated in the Heart, and is the finest Dress of the Soul, that makes it *all glorious within*; (Psal. xlv. 13.) and, though concealed from outward Observation, as it lies in the Heart, is discovered by its lovely Fruits in the Life; and is both durable, and Proof against Temptations to corrupt it, and incomparably more beautiful, and excellent, and advantageous to the immortal Soul, than all the fading, uncertain, perishing and ensnaring Pomp and Gaiety of outward Apparel can be to the mean, frail and mortal Body; and consists, among other Things, of a modest, humble and gentle, calm, tractable and peaceable Temper of Spirit, free from Pride and turbulent Passions: How much soever this may be despised, and the Deckings of the Body be preferred before it, by vain Minds, it is of high Account with God, and ought to be the Ambition of Women that would approve themselves to him, in Imitation of the meek and humble Jesus, (*Matth.* xi. 29.) and as always under God's all-seeing Eye.

5 *For after this Manner in the old Time, the holy Women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in Subjection unto their own Husbands;*

5. For this is the Way that holy and religious Women took, in former Ages, to ingratiate themselves with their Husbands, even in the most antient Times, when they had less Advantages than there now are, to understand, and excite them to their Duty: They, whose Hope and Trust were in the Lord for all the Blessings of this Life, and of that which is to come, put on those inward Adornings, and recommended and approved themselves, after this endearing Manner, to their own proper Husbands, in modest Reverence and Subjection to them;

6 *Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord: whose Daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any Amazement.*

6. Even as *Sarah*, the beloved Wife of *Abraham*, the Father of the Faithful, hearkened and paid a becoming Obedience to him, in Token of which she with a respectful Deference stiled him *her Lord*: (*Gen.* xviii. 12.) And as ye are her natural Offspring; so ye are and will appear to be her genuine Children, in the moral and spiritual Sense, by a laudable Imitation of her in Faith and Holiness; while, after her Example, ye behave well, and cheerfully discharge your conjugal Duty toward your Husbands, without being terrified with Fears of their or any other Person's Displeasure, on Account of your Religion, or of their not being mollified in their Temper toward you by your winning Carriage toward them; and without such unbelieving Confusion, as seized *Sarah*, when the Lord spake of her having a Son. (*Gen.* xviii. 9—15.)

7 *Likewise, ye Husbands, dwell with them according to Knowledge, giving Honour unto the Wife, as unto the weaker*

7. It is also needful to exhort those of you who are believing Husbands, that, on your Part, ye take Care to cohabit and associate on all Occasions in a faithful and friendly manner with your Wives, and treat them with Decency, Kindness and good Humour, according to the Rules of Prudence, and that superior Knowledge, which ye are

Vessel, and as being Heirs together of the Grace of Life; that your Prayers be not hindered.

supposed to have, by the Gospel-Revelation, of the Duty ye owe to them. Ye ought to pay high Respect to the Woman, who stands in this nearest of all Relations to you, by delighting in her, consulting her Comfort and Happiness, supporting her Credit and Authority in the Family, providing honourably for her, putting due Confidence in her, and never using her like a Slave, but as a Help-meet of great Importance to you, who have your own Infirmities to be borne with by her; though she, being of a delicate, weak and tender Frame, may be more liable to other Infirmities of Body or Mind, that call for your Compassion toward her, and your bearing with her. And ye ought to be the rather induced to this, as considering that, in Case she be a Christian, she in spiritual Concerns is upon a Level with you; ye being jointly Heirs alike of all heavenly Happiness, which is the best of Life, and the Gift of God's free Grace equally to you both; and that, if she be an Unbeliever, your Behaviour toward her ought to be in such an endearing Manner as, by the Blessing of God, shall win her over to the Faith of Christ, that she, through the Riches of divine Grace, may be an Heiress with you of eternal Glory; and so may not be sowred in her Temper, and prejudiced against joining with you, Morning and Evening, in Family-Prayer; and that important Duty may neither be neglected, nor uncomfortably and unprofitably performed; nor your Spirits be put out of Frame for a due Discharge of it; nor any of your Prayers, whether social or secret, may be prevented, or defeated, through your morose, imperious and unchristian-Temper and Behaviour toward her.

8 *Finally,* be ye *all of one Mind, having Compassion one of another; love as Brethren,* be *pitiful,* be *courteous.*

8. In fine, as to the Duties which equally concern you all in every Situation of Life, as Believers in Christ, Labour to cultivate a mutual Agreement in the great Doctrines and Duties of the Gospel, and a harmonious Temper, feelingly sympathizing (συμπαθεῖς) one with another in all Afflictions: Maintain and exercise an affectionate brotherly Spirit in Disposition, Thought, Word and Deed towards each other, as becomes Children of the same heavenly Father: Shew the tenderest Bowels of Compassion to those that labour under Weaknesses, Infirmities, or Troubles of any Kind, whether spiritual or temporal: And let all your Carriage one towards another, and towards all Men, be affable, friendly and engaging, (φιλόφρονες) to recommend Religion to all around you, by shewing what a sweet Influence it has upon your Hearts and Behaviour.

9 *Not rendering Evil for Evil, or Railing for Railing: but contrariwise, Blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called,*

9. Never suffer yourselves to meditate Revenge by doing an ill Turn to those that have injured you; nor ever revile those that have reviled you; remembring what a noble Example of this sort Christ has set for your Imitation: (*Chap.* ii. 23.) But on the contrary see that ye, like him, and in Obedience to his Command, (*Matth.* v. 4, and

Luke

that ye should inherit a Blessing.

Luke xxiii. 34.) pray for Blessings to those who curse you, and despitefully use you; knowing that ye, as Christians, are called by divine Grace, and obliged by the Example and Authority of Christ, to give into this amiable Temper and Behaviour, to the End that (ἵνα) ye, as the Children of God and of his own Likeness, may inherit, in Temporals and Spirituals, whatever shall be a Blessing to you in this Life, as well as everlasting Bliss and Glory in that which is to come.

10 *For he that will love Life, and see good Days, let him refrain his Tongue from Evil, and his Lips that they speak no Guile.*

10. For even as to this present World, Whoever he be that is desirous of enjoying Life with Comfort, and seeing many Days of Prosperity and Peace upon Earth; his best Way for attaining this End, is to fall in with the divine Directions of the following Purport, (*Ps.* xxxiv. 12—16.) Let him bridle his Tongue, and cease from all profane and filthy Speaking, and from all opprobrious Language; and keep the Door of his Lips from uttering Falshood, or Deceit of any Kind.

11 *Let him eschew Evil, and do Good; let him seek Peace, and ensue it.*

11. Let him have an Abhorrence of, and carefully avoid every Thing, that is sinful, in itself, or prejudicial to others; and practice every Thing, that is in its own Nature good, and beneficial to all whom he has to do with: Let him seek the Things that make for Peace, and do what in him lies, consistent with a good Conscience, to promote it in all civil and religious Societies; in his Family, among his Neighbours, Friends and Enemies, and between himself and them: And let him studiously and steadily follow after this extensive Peace by all prudent and honourable Means, and earnestly pursue it when it seems to flee from him, that, through the divine Favour, he may lead a quiet and peaceable Life in all Godliness and Honesty in this World, till he arrive at the Glory of a better. (See *Matth.* v. 9, and *Jam.* 3. 18.)

12 *For the Eyes of the Lord* are *over the Righteous, and his Ears* are open *unto their Prayers: but the Face of the Lord* is *against them that do Evil.*

12. For the great Lord of all, *whose Eyes run to and fro throughout the whole Earth, to shew himself strong on behalf of them that fear him,* and *whose Kingdom rules over all,* (2 Chron. xvi. 9, and *Ps.* ciii. 19.) takes special Notice of, bears a peculiar Affection to, and exercises a kind and watchful Care in his Providence over those, that are righteous in his Sight through Jesus Christ, and are upright in their Hearts and Lives; and he is graciously attentive, like one who listens with an open Ear, to the Voice of their Supplications, that are offered up with Humility, Faith and Fervour, for Help against their oppressive Enemies, and for shewing them seasonable Mercy of a temporal as well as spiritual Nature, according to what he sees to be best for them. But the Indignation of the Lord, like that which appears in the stern, angry and wrathful Countenance of a powerful and provoked Enemy, is utterly averse to, and burns against all Evil-doers, as a detestable

Generation, *to cut off the Remembrance of them from the Earth.* (Pf. xxxiv. 16.)

13 *And who* is *he that will harm you, if ye be Followers of that which is good?*

13. And as the Lord bears these contrary Dispositions toward the Righteous and the Wicked, which are all in his Hands, and under his Dominion, Where is the Creature, whether Man or Devil, that shall be permitted to destroy your truest Happiness, or work your Ruin, or bring any greater Hardships upon you, than ye shall be enabled to bear, and triumph over with Honour and Advantage, if in an intire Dependence on him, and Devotedness to him, ye be Imitators (τυ αγαθυ μιμηλαι) of God in his Goodness and Holiness, or of any one who, from a Conscience toward God, doth that which is benevolent, and acceptable to him? This will keep you out of Harm's Way, and ye will be safe under his Care. And what Monster of human Nature can be supposed so very wicked and cruel, as to seek the Hurt of such an inoffensive and beneficent Neighbour?

14 *But and if ye suffer for Righteousness Sake, happy* are *ye: And be not afraid of ther Terror, neither be troubled;*

14. But if, after all, the Providence of God should suffer you to come under the Severities and Reproaches of malignant Adversaries, on Account of your righteous and religious Character, as Professors of Christ and his Gospel; ye are nevertheless exceeding happy in his Favour and Love under such outward Calamities: And ye ought not to be terrified at their Threatnings, or at the worst they can do against you; nor be filled with Discouragement, Consternation and Confusion in your own Minds, as though they would turn to your real Disgrace and Ruin.

15 *But sanctify the Lord God in your Hearts: And* be *ready always to* give *an Answer to every Man that asketh you a Reason of the Hope that is in you, with Meekness and Fear:*

15. But still keep up high and honourable Thoughts of the Lord Jehovah, with a holy reverential Fear of him, (*Isa.* viii. 12, 13) and with an intire Trust in his infinite Wisdom, Power, Mercy and Faithfulness for your Security, and for ordering all Events to your everlasting Honour and Joy: (*Matth.* v. 10—12.) And, with this Dependence upon him, stand prepared at all Times to make your Apology (απολογιαν) by Word and Deed, in Defence of your Christian Faith and Confidence, to every one, who either in a Court of Judicature, or in familiar Conversation, or with a religious Intent for his own or other Christians Satisfaction, desires a reasonable Account of the Grounds of your Hopes of Salvation according to the Gospel, for which ye willingly suffer: And let this be done with a meek and modest Air, Temper of Spirit, and Manner of Expression; and with a serious Gravity and humble Reverence of God, and Jealousy over yourselves, lest ye offend him by behaving in any Way dishonourable to him, by concealing the Truth, or saying any Thing contrary to it; as also with a cautious Fear of offending any Persons by speaking disrespectfully to them, whether Magistrates or others, who may insist on such an Account.

16 *Having a good Conscience; that*

16. *Herein exercising yourselves, to have always a Conscience void of Offence toward God and Man;* (Acts xxiv. 16) and

whereas they speak Evil of you, as of Evil-doers, they may be ashamed that falsly accuse your good Conversation in Christ.

holding the Mystery of Faith in a pure Conscience, (1 Tim. iii. 9) that can reflect with Satisfaction and Peace on whatever ye say or do; to the End that, with respect to those Things, in which your Enemies charge and upbraid you, as a mischievous wicked Sort of People, who work Iniquity, foment Sedition, and are injurious to Society and the public Welfare, they may be effectually confuted, and forced with Shame to retract their Slanders, who are reproachfully and maliciously traducing (ἐπηρεάζοντες) your blameless, humble and benevolent Life and Conversation, which ye lead to the Honour of Christ, through Faith in him, and by Virtue derived from him.

17 *For* it is *better, if the Will of God be so, that ye suffer for Well-doing than for Evil-doing.*

17. For it undoubtedly is every Way more eligible, honourable and advantageous, and ye will have the nobler Support and Satisfaction in your own Souls, if it please God, in his Providence, to permit outward Tribulations to befal you, merely on account of your acquitting yourselves well to him, and to your own Consciences, in doing what is good and right, and acceptable to him, than they could be, were they to be brought upon you for any Crimes or Follies of your own, which would add a terrible Sting to them, and make them an insupportable Burden, that would otherwise have sat easy upon you.

18 *For Christ also hath once suffered for Sins, the Just for the Unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to Death in the Flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:*

18. For, in the Case of Sufferings without any Faults of your own to deserve them, ye are only conformed to the Image of your Lord and Saviour; and may well bear them patiently after his Example, and for his Sake; when ye consider that he, though perfectly holy and righteous, without the least Iniquity in Heart or Life to deserve any ill Usage, underwent the most ignominious and agonizing Sufferings for the Sins of others to expiate them; which he did, not by repeated Offerings, like the legal Sacrifices, but once for all, as, through the infinite Dignity and Perfection of his Sacrifice, he made complete Atonement at once. (*Heb.* vii. 27, and ix. 26, 28.) He, the just and holy One, suffered all the Punishment due to Sin in the Room and Stead of unrighteous and ungodly Sinners, that he might reconcile such as we are to God, (*Rom.* v. 6, 8, 10) and bring us to a holy Communion with him, Conformity and Obedience to him here, and an everlasting Enjoyment of him hereafter; he having been crucified and slain for us in the Body of his Flesh, which he had assumed into personal Union with himself; and which he raised again to an immortal Life of Blessedness and Glory by his own divine Power,* together with the inseparable quickning Agency of the Holy Spirit.

* By *the Spirit* some understand *Christ's divine Nature,* and others, *the Holy Spirit,* the last of which seems to me to be most directly intended, if compared with *Gen.* vi. 3, which the two following Verses here, I think, refer to. However, as I would not positively determine against the former Sense, both are included in the Paraphrase, that the Reader may take his Choice.

19 *By which also he went and preached unto the Spirits in Prison;*

19. By which Spirit, as then existing, and acting together with, and from him, he, going in a Way of special Operation and Manifestation to the Old World before the Flood, preached Repentance and Reformation, and the Righteousness of Faith † by the Ministry of *Noah*, by whom he preached to that wicked People, who then lived upon Earth, but whose Souls are now shut up in the Prison of Hell, there to abide for ever, for their provoking Iniquities. (*Matth.* v. 25, 26, and 2 *Pet.* ii. 4, 5.)

20 *Which sometimes were disobedient, when once the Long-suffering of God waited in the Days of Noah, while the Ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight Souls, were saved by Water.*

20. Who formerly disbelieved, rebelled against, and obstinately refused to obey the solemn Admonitions, which that Preacher of Righteousness gave them; and would not attend to, and comply with those Strivings of the Spirit with them therein, which, through the Patience and Long-Forbearance of God's Mercy, were continued to them for the Space of an hundred and twenty Years, (*Gen.* vi. 3) while *Noah*, being warned of God, and believing what he had told him about the Destruction of that wicked Generation, (*Heb.* xi. 7) was preparing Materials, and putting them together, to make the Ark, which was likewise a practical Sermon to them all along, till the Time that the Flood came upon them; in which Ark, that eminent Type of Christ, a very small Number of Believers, even *Noah*, his Wife, and three Sons and their Wives, to the Amount of eight Persons only, escaped the impending Destruction from, and were saved out of the Water *, which lifted up the Ark upon its Surface, while all the rest of that ungodly World were swallowed up in the Deluge, as all impenitent and unbelieving Sinners will be in the more dreadful Floods of divine Wrath at the last Day.

21 *The like Figure, whereunto,* even *Baptism, doth also now save us (not the putting away of the Filth of the Flesh, but the Answer of a good Conscience towards God) by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ:*

21. Answerable to this temporal Salvation in the Ark from the Flood, by Means of the Waters bearing it up, we now have Salvation in Christ from Sin and Wrath, by Means of the Gospel-Ordinance of Baptism, which in a Sense may be called its Antitype (ἀντίτυπον): Not that a bare external Administration of it in applying Water to the Body, as though *that* were to wash away its Defilement, is of any Avail of itself for this spiritual Purpose: But all its Efficacy lies in what is signified by it, as the Purification of the Heart was by Circumcision in the Flesh; and as it is a

† *Noah* may well be supposed to have preached, among other Things, the *Righteousness of Faith in the Messiah* for Justification; since the *Ark*, which he was preparing for the Safety of himself and Family, was a significant Type of Salvation by Jesus Christ; and *Noah* is called *a Preacher of Righteousness*, (2 Pet. ii. 5) and is said to have been an *Heir of the Righteousness of Faith*. (Heb. xi. 7.)

* I am inclined to think, with Mr. *Pyle*, that *by Water* (δι' ὕδατος) may be more naturally understood to mean *from* or *out of the Water*, according to a like Sense, in which the *Preposition* (διὰ) is to be taken in 1 *Cor.* iii. 15, which speaks of being saved so as *by Fire*. (διὰ πυρός) And so it was *the Ark*, and the Safety of those which were in it, and not *the Water*, that prefigured the Gospel-Salvation in Christ, as signified by *Baptism*, by means of which, when the Thing signified by it is found in us, through Faith in him, we are saved, as the Apostle explains it in the next Verse.

solemn

solemn Obligation upon Conscience to return a suitable Answer to its Demands of Obedience to God, we having been therein devoted to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in whose Name, as the one and only true God, we were baptized: (*Matth.* xxviii. 19.) And we are made Partakers of this Salvation, and thus restipulate to God, according to our Baptismal Engagements, through Faith in the Resurrection of our Saviour Jesus Christ, as he *was delivered for our Offences, and raised again for our Justification*; (Rom. iv. 25.) as also for Quickening us from the Death of Sin to the Life of Righteousness in this World, (*Rom.* vi. 3—6.) and raising us up, Soul and Body, to eternal Life in the World to come, that we may live in Glory with him.

22 *Who is gone into Heaven, and is on the Right Hand of God; Angels, and Authorities, and Powers being made subject unto him.*

22. Who, as the Pledge, Earnest, Evidence and Security of it, and as our Fore-runner, is ascended in his risen Body to Heaven; and is now enthroned with the most eminent Dignity and Honour at the right Hand of the Majesty on high; (See the Note on *Acts* vii. 55.) and is invested with all Authority in Heaven and Earth; the good and evil Angels of every Rank, and all the Rulers and Potentates of this World, being placed in an absolute Subjection to him, that he may order and govern, commission or restrain them, and make them one Way or other subserve his own and his Father's Glory, and the Good of his People, as he is *Head over all Things to the Church.* (Eph. i. 21, 22.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

When believing Wives, like *Sarah*, *Abraham*'s Consort, are cloathed with, and more solicitous about the inward Ornaments of the never-fading Charms of Modesty, Meekness and Humility, from a Principle of Trust in God, than about the Deckings of rich and splendid Attire; and when they pay a respectful Subjection to their own Husbands in all lawful Things, how amiable is their Character! How acceptable to God, and winning even upon such Husbands as disregard his Word! And with what Honour, Humanity and Tenderness, under all their Infirmities, should believing Husbands treat them, that they may live together as Co-Heirs of the Grace of Life, and their Prayers may not be hindered!——*Personal* as well as *relative* Duties are incumbent on all the Disciples of Jesus. They should be as harmonious, as possible, in important Sentiments and mutual Affection; and should be compassionate, kind and courteous towards all Men; never retaliating Injuries, or opprobrious Language, but rather wishing all Good even to those who use them ill, as knowing that this is a Duty, to which they are called, in order to their own inheriting a Blessing. And O how necessary is it for their present Peace and Comfort, to refrain from all Evil in Word and Deed, and to pursue the Good of others, and the Things that make for Peace! Who can find in his Heart to hurt such an inoffensive, generous and benevolent Christian, or can compass his eternal Ruin? There is a natural Tendency in his engaging Behaviour to make his Passage easy through this World; and God himself has a special Care of him, to guard him from Mischief, and shew him Favour; and to hear his Cries in Distress, and pour Confusion upon his Enemies. If he suffers for Righteousness-Sake, he need not be terrified at what his Persecutors can threaten, or do against him; but should be ready to give an Account, with Modesty and Reverence, of the Grounds of his Christian-Hope, on all proper Occasions; and ought to display its happy Influence upon him, in constantly maintaining a good Conscience, and holy Conversation, by the Grace of God, to the silencing and shaming of all that would invidiously slander him. And O how much better is it to suffer in a good, than in a bad Cause! And how cheerfully should

should Believers submit to the greatest Hardships that, by divine Permission, may befall them! To animate them hereunto, Let them consider that the holy Jesus willingly suffered in his human Nature the most terrible Death of the Cross in their room and stead, to make Atonement for their Sins, and bring them to God and Glory; and that he was raised again by the Divine Spirit, and is now exalted at the Father's Right Hand in Heaven, with full Authority over all Angels, Men and Devils, and every Rank of Creatures, to restrain or employ them, as may be most for the Security and Happiness of his People. And O how great is his Salvation, which is signified by the Ordinance of Baptism! But it really belongs only to those, whose Hearts, as purified by Faith, correspond to the Meaning and Obligation of that sacred Sign, is a Sort of Antitype to *that*, which *Noah* and his Family had in the Ark. Disobedient Sinners shall indeed perish, like the ungodly World, with whom Christ strove by his Spirit in the Warnings that were given them by *Noah*'s Ministry, with all Long-suffering for an Hundred and Twenty Years together, who now, for their Impenitence and Unbelief, are shut up in an eternal Hell, as the most doleful of all Prisons: But they who believe in the risen Saviour, be they fewer or more, shall, by Virtue derived from him, be raised to a blissful Immortality, and dwell with him for ever in Heaven. O what a sweet Support and Comfort are these Thoughts to all suffering Saints under the heaviest Tribulations, which they may be called to endure for his Sake!

CHAP. IV.

The Apostle improves the Consideration of Christians Sufferings, for Purity and Holiness in Heart and Life, 1—6. *and of the approaching Dissolution of the* Jewish *State, for Sobriety, Watchfulness, Prayer and mutual Love, and for a faithful Discharge of religious Trusts,* 7—11. *and cautions Believers against exposing themselves to Punishments for their own Faults; but encourages them to rejoice and glory in Reproaches and Sufferings for Christ, instead of being surprised or dismay'd at them; and to commit their Souls, in a Course of Well-doing, to the Care of a faithful God,* 12—19.

TEXT.

1 *FOrasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the Flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same Mind: For he that hath suffered in the Flesh, hath ceased from Sin;*

PARAPHRASE.

1. NOW, to return from the Digression about Christ's preaching in the Ministry of *Noah*, &c. (*Chap.* iii. 19—22.) Since the Immaculate Jesus has so patiently and extremely suffered in his Body for us, who believe in him, that he might expiate our Sins, (*Chap.* iii. 18.) and now no longer bears them, as he did before, (*Chap.* ii. 24.) Let this fortify you against Impatience and Faintings under your Trials for his Sake, that ye may be arm'd against them by a holy Submission and Intrepidity of Spirit, after his noble and endearing Example: For whoever has *crucified the old Man, the Body of Sin*, or *the Flesh with its Affections and Lusts*, according to the Design, and in Virtue of the Death of Christ, (*Rom.* vi. 6, and *Gal.* v. 24.) * and has willingly

* As *the Flesh* is sometimes taken, in a literal Sense, for *the Body*; and at others, in a figurative Sense, for *the Corruption of Human Nature*, (See the Note on *Gal.* v. 19.) *He that has suffered in the Flesh* may be considered in either of those Views, as in the Paraphrase; one or other of which seems more natural to me, than any that I have met with.

and patiently suffered fiery Trials for his Sake, and in Conformity to him, (*ver.* 12, 13.) in his mortal Body; such a Christian has renounced all his former sinful Principles and Practices, is crucified to them, utterly disallows and abhors them, and with full Purpose of Heart has departed from them;

2 That he no longer should live the rest of his *Time in the Flesh, to the Lusts of Men, but to the Will of God.*

2. That he may no longer go on, as formerly, to spend the Remainder of his Days in the Body at an ungodly and immoral Rate, in a Course of Life that is agreeable to the corrupt Affections and Desires of carnal Men; but in all holy Dispositions, Designs and Conversation, according to the Will and Command of God, as may be most for his Glory, and well pleasing in his Sight.

3 For the Time past of our Life may suffice us to have wrought the Will of the Gentiles, when we walked in Lasciviousness, Lusts, Excess of Wine, Revellings, Banquetings, and abominable Idolatries:

3. For we have too long wasted the precious Hours of Life already, and ought to think it more than enough, that we have employed them in Compliances with the wicked Inclinations and Practices of our Heathen-Neighbours, to whom we, and especially the *Gentile*-Converts amongst us, conform'd ourselves; when in our State of Unregeneracy we indulged, and persisted in wanton Dalliances, as expressed by our Looks, Words and Gestures; in criminal Propensions and Pursuits after unlawful Embraces; in immoderate drinking of Wine, or other strong Liquors; in Gormandizings (Κῶμοι;) and Riotings; in luxurious Carousings; and in idolatrous Worship, which is not only unlawful and detestable in itself, but also on account of the shameful Lewdness, Gluttony, Drunkenness and other Vices that attended it, particularly among the Heathens:

4 Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same Excess of Riot, speaking Evil of you:

4. With Respect to which, they wonder what is come to you, that ye have now so unexpectedly forsaken their Company, and don't still run along with them into the same dissolute and profuse Indulgences to all Manner of Luxury and Intemperance, as ye were wont, and they continue to do, with guilty Pleasure, and without Remorse: And hereupon they vilify you and your Religion, as though it has made you the most unsociable, stiff, precise and humoursome Creatures, that are not fit for common Society, and ought to be the Objects of their Contempt and Scorn.

5 Who shall give Account to him that is ready to judge the Quick and the Dead.

5. Who, whatever they think of the Matter now, shall most certainly be called to a strict Account for all *their ungodly Deeds and hard Speeches*; (Jude, *ver.* 15.) and must answer for them to that great Lord, on whom all their Reproaches of you for his Sake ultimately fall; and who has all Authority, and will ere long appear, to pass and execute a decisive Sentence upon the whole World, even upon all that shall be living on the Earth, and that shall be found among the Dead and raised again, at the last Day, to the Joy of the Saints and Terror of his Enemies. (*John* v. 27—29.)

6 For, for this Cause was the Gospel

6. For this is the End, for which the Gospel was preached to those Believers, who are now *the Dead in Christ*, (1 Thess. iv.

preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to Men in the Flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit.

iv. 16.) as well as to those who are still living upon Earth, that they, by a divine Power attending it, being thoroughly mortified and dead to their former sinful Inclinations and Courses of Life, might be eventually censured and condemned, and even put to Death, for their novel and unsociable Principles and Behaviour, as being judged according to the Dictates of corrupt Nature, and of mere natural Men; but that they might really live after a spiritual and joyful Manner, by a holy Conformity to the Image and Will of God in their renewed Souls, as being quickned from the Death of Sin to the Life of Righteousness, and assisted, by his Spirit, to do the Things that are pleasing in his Sight through Jesus Christ; and might at last be raised up to a glorious and immortal Life, *by his Spirit that dwells in them.* (Rom. viii. 11.)

7 *But the End of all Things is at hand: Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto Prayer.*

7. But consider, for your Encouragement and Caution under present and future Trials, that all the Scenes, which lie before you in this World, will soon be over and gone: The *Jewish* State and Nation, Temple, City and Worship will quickly come to their final Period, according to our blessed Lord's Prediction; (*Luke* xix. 43, 44.) the Death of every one of you is near at Hand; yea, and in Comparison with Eternity, the Day is drawing on a-pace, when the Earth and all Things in it shall be dissolved. (2 *Pet.* iii. 10, 11.) It therefore greatly behoves you, in this View and Prospect, to be wise, sober, and temperate in all Things relating to your Passions, Appetites and Enjoyments; and to be constantly upon your Watch against Temptations, and all the Workings of indwelling Corruption, and for all Assistances of the Spirit, that ye may be in a right Frame for Prayer, and may readily fall in with all occasional, as well as stated Seasons of addressing the Throne of Grace for every needful Blessing, and particularly for Preservation from Sin, and from Troubles, or for Succour under them, and a sanctified Use of them, and Deliverance in due Time out of them all.

8 *And above all Things have fervent Charity among yourselves: For Charity shall cover the Multitude of Sins.*

8. And let it be your governing Concern to cultivate a warm, brotherly and cordial Affection one towards another, (*Rom.* xii. 9, 10.) especially in perilous Days, as being influenced to it by the superlative Love of God in Christ to you: For as he, in the Greatness of his Love, has freely forgiven and covered all your Trespasses, that none of them may be brought into Judgment against you; (*Eph.* iv. 32.) so a sincere and ardent Love in you towards one another for Christ's Sake, and in Obedience to his Command, will inspire you with a forgiving Temper toward your Brethren, and hide their numerous Failings from your own Resentment, that ye may kindly overlook, and be careful to conceal them from, instead of exposing them to others. (1 *Cor.* xiii. 4—7.)

9 *Use Hospitality one to another without grudging.*

9. As another Token of Love, Be ready to exercise all Manner of Kindness, and to give all seasonable Assistances one towards another, and particularly in entertaining religious Strangers, who travel Abroad for spreading the Gospel, or suffer Loss for Christ, or are forced to skulk about, through the Violence of the Times, or are cast among you by any Providence; Cheerfully receive and generously relieve such as these, without Reluctance, or thinking much at the Expence.

10 *As every Man hath received the Gift*, even so *minister the same one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold Grace of God.*

10. And as all Talents for *public* Offices, as well as private Capacities of Usefulness in the Church, are the free Gift of God, Let every one, that is favoured with them, be careful to employ them, in Proportion to what he has received, for the Advantage and Edification one of another, as Persons entrusted with, and accountable to their great Lord and Master for the various Gifts and Endowments, which he has graciously bestowed upon them, that they may manage them with Wisdom and Faithfulness, like honourable Stewards, (καλοι οικονομοι) for the Good of the Church, for which he gave them.

11 *If any Man speak*, let him speak *as the Oracles of God: If any Man minister*, let him do it *as of the Ability which God giveth: That God in all Things may be glorified through Jesus Christ; to whom be Praise and Dominion for ever and ever, Amen.*

11. If any one be called to the Office of *Preaching*, Let him attend to the sacred Writings of divine Revelation, that he may deliver nothing but what is agreeable to them, and may faithfully declare the Mind and Will of God according to them, in such a serious, solemn and reverential, fervent, spiritual and holy Manner, as becomes them: If another be called to the Office of a *Deacon*, * to collect, take Care of, and distribute the Church's Stock, for the Relief of the Poor, the Maintenance of the Ministry, and defraying the necessary Expences of divine Ordinances, Let him attend to his Charge with all Fidelity, Prudence, Tenderness and Diligence, according to the Ability of Body and Mind, that God has furnished him with, and according to the Proportion of Contributions, and of the Cases, committed to his Care; to the End that all the temporal, as well as spiritual, Affairs of the Church may be conducted in such a Manner, as shall be most for the Glory of God, and the magnifying of his great Name, with such Thanksgivings and Praises from the Dispensers and Receivers of the Benefit, as are acceptable to him, through the Mediation, Merit and Advocacy of Jesus Christ, To whom, and to the Father through him, may all grateful Acknowledgments and Honours be paid, and universal Power, Authority and Dominion ascribed, to the endless Ages of Eternity! In Testimony of our earnest Desire and joyful Assurance of its being so, let us unanimously join our *Amen*.

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* *If any Man minister*, or *deaconize*, (διακονει) seems most immediately to relate to the *Deacon*'s Office, in Distinction from that of public Preaching; (See the Notes on *Acts* vi. 2, and *Rom*. xii. 7.) though they also may be extended, one to Christian-Conference, and the other to charitable Contributions, in private Capacities.

12 *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery Trial, which is to try you, as though some strange Thing happened unto you:*

12. My dear suffering Brethren, while ye reflect on the Imperfection of your present State, and the Depravity of Mankind, which fills their Hearts with Enmity to God and Godliness, and on our Lord's forewarning you, that in the World ye shall have Tribulation, but shall have Peace in him, who has overcome the World, (*John* xvi. 33.) Ye ought not to be discouraged or surprised at the severest Persecutions that can befall you, which, in Allusion to the approaching Conflagration of *Jerusalem*, may be called *fiery Trials*; and which, as they are designed of God, not to destroy, but to refine you, are like a Furnace to try the Sincerity of, and purify your Graces, and purge away your Dross, even all your Sin. (*Isa.* i. 25, and xxvii. 9, and xlviii. 10.) I entreat you not to be dismay'd at them, as though they were unexpected and uncommon Things, and foreign to the Methods of God's Love to his own dear Children; and as though ye were dealt hardly with in bein g called to suffer them.

13 *But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are Partakers of Christ's Sufferings; that when his Glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding Joy.*

13. But rather reckon upon them, think of them, and stand prepared to meet them, with holy Joy; for as much as your Lord and Saviour sympathises with you in all your Afflictions, and counts them his own; (*Matth.* xxv. 40, 45, and *Acts* ix. 4.) and ye therein are made conformable to his Sufferings for you, to the End that when he shall appear in all his Glory at the last Day, ye may rejoice with Exultation and Triumph in, and together with him. (*Rom.* viii. 17, *Col.* iii. 4, and 2 *Tim.* ii. 12.)

14 *If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye: For the Spirit of Glory and of God resteth upon you. On their Part he is evil spoken of, but on your Part he is glorified.*

14. If ye be upbraided and vilified for your holy Profession of Christ's Name, and yet take it patiently, and even rejoice in it; This is a blessed Token of your Union and Communion with him, and will, through his Merit and Grace, turn to your own richest Account. For the Spirit of God, who, as a divine Person, may well be stiled *the Spirit of Glory*, as the Father and Son are called *the Father of Glory*, and *the Lord of Glory*; (Eph. i. 17, and 1 *Cor.* ii. 8, See the Note there) they all being undividedly one in Nature, as *the God of Glory*; (Ps. xxix. 3, and Acts vii. 2.) This glorious Spirit therein eminently bears Witness to you, and is evidently present, in a Way of gracious and influential Abode with you, to support and comfort you under all Revilings and Sufferings, to carry you with Honour through them, and bring you off gloriously at the End of them; and to be himself your Earnest and Pledge of the eternal Glory, to which he will conduct you. On the Side of your persecuting Enemies, Christ and his Offices, * as well as the

* *He is evil spoken of*, and *he is glorified* may, by the Construction, refer either to *Christ*, or to *the Spirit*; and therefore the Paraphrase turns our Thoughts to both; though I most incline to take it as referring to *Christ*, who frequently speaks of the Reproaches, Contempt, Hatred and Persecutions of his Disciples for his Sake, as levelled against, and terminating upon himself.

Spirit

Spirit and his Operations, are blasphemed; (βλασφημεῖται) and their Reproaches of you aim at, and ultimately fall upon him, for whose Sake they are cast upon you: But on your Side, Honour redounds to his glorious Name, by your Faith and Patience, and by your bravely owning and confessing him in your Sufferings, and in your Praises.

15 *But let none of you suffer as a Murderer, or as a Thief, or as an Evil-doer, or as a Busy-body in other Mens Matters.*

15. But let me caution you to take heed, that none of you bring Troubles upon himself for any Crimes of his own, which deserve, and would justly expose him to them; as for Instance, Let none of you render himself obnoxious, not only to the Anger of God, but to the Lash of the civil Government, as chargeable with murderous, or with thievish Designs and Practices; or as guilty of seditious, or any other injurious and unlawful Courses; or as an idle, pragmatical Person, who neglects his own Business, and takes upon him to intrude into, and act the Part of a busy Inspector, (ἀλλοτριοεπίσκοπος) and Governor of the Consciences, or secular Affairs of other People, that don't belong to him; and to meddle with their Concerns, which he has nothing to do with, and has no Right to pry into, or interest himself in.

16 *Yet if* any Man suffer *as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this Behalf.*

16. But (δὲ) if any one bear with a Christian-Spirit the greatest Indignities, Reproaches and Cruelties, merely on account of his Profession of Christ, and doing the Duties belonging to it, he has no Cause, nor ought he, to look upon them as a real Disgrace, or as what he need be asham-ed of: But, on the contrary, he should esteem them as an Honour conferred upon him, which he may well glory in, and glorify God for, with a cheerful Submission to his Will, and the Disposals of his over-ruling Providence, who *counts him worthy to suffer Shame for the Name of Christ*, (Acts v. 41.) and enables him to undergo false Imputations, and the sharpest Trials, in such a Manner, as may be most to the Honour and Praise of his Lord and Saviour.

17 *For the Time* is come *that Judgment must begin at the House of God: And if* it *first* begin *at us, what shall the End* be *of them that obey not the Gospel of God?*

17. For the Time is just now at hand, when not only the Temple, God's antient Habitation at *Jerusalem*, shall be laid waste, in his righteous Judgment, according to Christ's Prediction; (*Luke* xxi. 6.) but his New Testament-Church, which was typified by that House of God, and in which he dwells in a more spiritual Manner, shall begin to be most remarkably visited with trying Dispensations of Providence for their Correction and Amendment, though for the Elect's Sake those Days of Tribulation shall be shortened: (*Matth.* xxiv. 9, 21, 22.) And if such severe Discipline begin first of all to be exercised on us, who are *the Habitation of God through the Spirit*, (Eph. ii. 22.) even as his Judgments of old *began at his Sanctuary*, (Ezek. ix. 6.) What can be expected, but that his Wrath should go forth to the utmost Extremity against the Wicked and Ungodly, who, through their Obstinacy and Unbelief, disregard and reject the Gospel of the ever-blessed God, as it soon will,

in a most dreadful Manner, against the whole Body of the refractory *Jews?*

18 *And if the Righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the Ungodly and the Sinner appear?*

18. And if, in these perilous Times, they who are in a State of Favour with God through Faith in the Righteousness of Christ, and are renewed and sanctified by his Spirit unto holy Obedience, shall have a narrow, though sure Escape, by the Interpositions of divine Providence and Grace, like Persons *saved as by Fire,* (1 Cor. iii. 15.) and like *Paul* and his Company, who scarcely, or *with much ado,* (μόλις) *came at the Boat* for their Preservation; (*Acts* xxvii. 16.) * How dismal must the Condition of those impenitent and unbelieving Sinners be, who persist in their Impieties and Iniquities, and are out of Favour with God, and fit Fuel for his Wrath? Where can they find any Retreat for Safety? Where shall they dare to lift up their guilty Heads, or be able to appear? Or where can they expect, and where must they be obliged to appear? Their End must certainly be for ever inexpressibly miserable; there can be no hiding Place for them, when God shall come to deal in Righteousness with them.

19 *Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the Will of God, commit the keeping of their Souls to him in Well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.*

19. Upon the whole therefore, In Reflection upon these awful Events, which carry so much Encouragement to you as his People, and so much Terror to his and your Enemies, Let them who endure Persecutions and Afflictions under the over-ruling Providence of God, according to his Appointment, and who bear them, by the Assistance of his Spirit, in such a Manner as is pleasing to him, commit their Lives and Souls, and all their Concerns, for Time and Eternity, by Faith to him, in a Course of holy Walking with him, and of doing Good to Friends and Enemies, and to all about them; trusting in him through Jesus Christ, as faithful to his Promises of Safety and Happiness in the worst of Times, and as the Almighty Creator and Preserver, who is able to perform them.

* *The Salvation,* here spoken of, seems from the whole Current of the Context to be, mostly at least, of a *temporal* Nature: For the principal Design of this Chapter is to prepare and fortify Believers against the severest Sufferings for Christ, and the dreadful Calamities that were coming upon the *Jewish* Church and State at the Conflagration of *Jerusalem,* which it is supposed was then within about Six or Seven Years at hand; and, in Allusion to which, the Calamities of those Days are called *fiery Trials,* and *the End of all Things is* said to be *at hand.* (ver. vii. 12.) But if we make it refer to a *spiritual and eternal Salvation,* it is to be understood only of the extreme Difficulties, Troubles, Sufferings and apparent Dangers, through which the Righteous were to pass in their Way to Heaven, and not of any real Hazard, as to the Event, with respect to the Purpose, Promise and Power of God for accomplishing it.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How animating is a Consideration of the Extremity and Design of Christ's Sufferings, to determine us against all Compliances with the sensual Indulgences of Men of carnal Minds; and to be conformable to the holy Will of God! Do our old Companions wonder at, and revile us, for not running any longer, as we were wont, into the same Excess of Riot with them? Let both Parties consider, that every one must give an Account of his own Behaviour, whether good or bad, to the great Judge of all, who will determine in Favour of those, that are quickened from spiritual Death by Means of the Gospel, which indeed brings them under the Censure of Men that judge according to the Flesh; but leads them into a Life of Holiness, according to the Will of God, by the Power of his Spirit. How should the near Approach of Tribulations and Death excite us to Sobriety, Watchfulness and Prayer, to all Exercises of brotherly Love and Hospitality, and to a faithful Improvement, like good Stewards of the manifold Gifts and Talents, in public or private Capacities, which God in his free Favour has given us, that they may be employed to his Glory through Jesus Christ! Let Christians take heed, that they never bring Sufferings on themselves, by their own sinful and injurious Behaviour; or by prying and intruding, like Busy-Bodies, into other People's Affairs, instead of minding their own. But as we, who would cleave unto the Lord, may expect to meet with fiery Trials for his Sake, we ought not to be surprized, or affrighted at them; but should rather rejoice and glory in them, as an Honour put upon us, while we are called and enabled to glorify him, by bearing them in an honourable Manner, through the Spirit of Glory's resting upon us, and making us conformable to Christ in his Sufferings, that we may triumph with exceeding Joy, when he shall appear in all his Glory, and we shall be glorified together with him. But if the righteous themselves must pass through great Tribulations, for their Correction and Amendment, and God begin first in an awful Manner with them, that are his Habitation through the Spirit, and they narrowly escape out of imminent Dangers, How dreadful must the Case of the Sinner and Ungodly be, who rejects the Gospel through Unbelief! And where can they appear with Safety and Comfort? Their Ruin must be unavoidable and insupportable. As ever therefore we would not perish with them, May we, in a Way of Well-doing, commit our Lives and Souls by Faith, under all Afflictions, to the Care of that God, who is faithful to his Promises, and is able to save his Creatures, and to perform all Things for them that trust in him.

CHAP. V.

The Apostle exhorts and encourages Elders to be cheerful, disinterested and humble, in a faithful Discharge of their Office, 1—4. *Directs younger Christians to submit to their Elders, yea, all of them one to another; and to yield with Humility and Patience, to the Hand of God, and cast all their Care on him, and to be sober, watchful, and stedfast in the Faith against all the Temptations of the Devil;* 5—9. *And then prays for their Growth and Establishment; and concludes with Salutations, and a Benediction,* 10—14.

TEXT.

1 THE Elders which are among you, I exhort, who am also an Elder, and a Witness of the Sufferings of Christ,

PARAPHRASE.

1. AS to those that are spiritual Guides or Pastors, chosen out of, and residing in your several Churches, and may be called *Elders*, because Ministers of mature Age and Standing are ordinarily the most proper to be put into that sacred Office; I would direct my Exhortation to such, and equally bind it upon my own Conscience, as being myself, not

and alſo a Partaker of the Glory that ſhall be revealed.

not a Lord and Maſter *, but a Fellow-Elder and Servant of Chriſt, though honoured with the apoſtolic Character: (2 *Epiſt.* i. 1.) And that they may pay the greater Regard to what I am going to urge upon them, Let them conſider that I was an Eye-witneſs of the bitter Agonies and Sufferings of Chriſt in Soul and Body, (*Mark* xiv. 33 &c, and 54 &c) and of their glorious Iſſues in his Reſurrection from the Dead; (*Acts* iii. 15) and am now bold to bear my Teſtimony to them, and to their important Deſign, by Preaching, and by all Manner of Sufferings for his Sake, and after his Example, even at the Peril of my Life: And as his Sufferings turn to my Account, ſo I have an Earneſt of, and (as I am well aſſured) ſhall be admitted to a bleſſed Communion with him in the Glory, which he has purchaſed by his Death, and taken Poſſeſſion of, as my Head, Repreſentative and Forerunner; and which will be openly and fully manifeſted at his ſecond Appearing, when *he ſhall come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe.* (2 Theſſ. i. 10.)

2 *Feed the Flock of God which is among you, taking the Overſight* thereof, *not by Conſtraint, but willingly; not for filthy Lucre, but of a ready Mind;*

2. Let thoſe of you who are ſet over the ſeveral Churches in the Lord, to which ye are related, ſee to it that, as *Paſtors after his own Heart, ye feed his People with Knowledge and Underſtanding*, (Jer. iii. 15) even his Lambs and his Sheep, (*John* xxi. 15, 16) and that (ποιμανατε) ye exerciſe a holy Diſcipline, according to his Word, in governing the *Church of God, which he*, in his incarnate State, *purchaſed with his own Blood*, (Acts xx. 28) and has committed, as his Flock, to your paſtoral Care under him, as *the chief Shepherd*: (v. 4) Act the Part of good Biſhops † in perſonally inſpecting their Principles, Temper and Conduct, and in looking after all their ſpiritual Concerns with Wiſdom and Meekneſs, Fidelity, Watchfulneſs and Care; and let this be done, not by any Force upon your Inclinations, or by Fear of Shame among Men, in Caſe of Neglect, but with Freedom and Delight as Matter of Choice; not, like the falſe Teachers, (*Tit.* i. 11) with mercenary Views to worldly Advantages, which are ſordid Gains, and defiling to the Conſcience, and to the ſacred Office of him, who makes them his governing

* This Way of the Apoſtle *Peter*'s Addreſs, ſaying, *I exhort or entreat, who am alſo a Fellow Elder*, (παρακαλω ο συμπρεσβυτερος) is quite different from the high Tone of *the Pope*, who under Pretence of being *Peter*'s Succeſſor, and *Head* of the Church, *commands* with ſovereign Authority, like *a Lord*, and not a Fellow-Elder, which all the Apoſtles were with other Elders, though every Elder was not an Apoſtle.

† Theſe *Elders* were to *biſhop it*, (επισκοπουν) or to exerciſe the Office of *Biſhops* over the Flock; (See the Note on *Acts* xx. 17) which ſhews that, though they were only ordinary Paſtors, they were the Chriſtian *Biſhops* of the Apoſtolic Age, to fulfil all the Duties of that Office, which is one and the ſame in thoſe that are ſpoken of as *Paſtors* or *Elders*, who are to feed and govern the Flock, which is called God's *Heritage* or *Clergy*, (ver. 3.) as diſtinguiſhed from *Paſtors*; and theſe Officers are at other Times deſcribed as *Elders*, that are to behave with Gravity and Prudence, like aged and experienced Men; and at others, as *Biſhops*, that are to take the Overſight of the Church: And ſo all theſe are only different Denominations, taken from ſuch like Conſiderations of the ſame Office, to ſet out the Nature and Extent of their Charge.

End; but with a Heart, that is ready to engage in this delightful Service, purely for the Honour of Christ and the Good of Souls.

3 *Neither as being Lords over* God's *Heritage, but being Ensamples to the Flock.*

3. Nor let your important Trust be managed with ambitious Views of Honour to yourselves, or in an imperious, haughty, domineering Manner, as though ye were Lords and Masters, that have Dominion over the Faith and Consciences of the People of God's Choice, whom, like *Israel* of old, (*Deut.* iv. 20, and ix. 29) he has made his peculiar Inheritance, as it were by Lot; and who may be consider'd as *the Clergy*, (των κληρων) which he has set apart for himself, with a Distinction from the rest of Mankind: But take care to set a good Example of Humility, Self-denial and all holy Conversation and Godliness, to the whole Company of Believers under your Charge, that they may be induced to follow your Steps. (See 1 *Tim.* iv. 12.)

4 *And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a Crown of Glory that fadeth not away.*

4. And, for your Encouragement hereunto, always bear in Mind, that when *the great Shepherd of the Sheep*, (Heb. xiii. 20) who has purchased them by his Blood, and secures them by his Power and Grace, under whom ye act, and to whom ye are accountable, shall appear on the Throne of his Glory to gather all Nations before him, and shall set his Sheep at his Right-hand, and pronounce them the blessed of his Father &c. (*Matth.* xxv. 31—34.) Then ye, who are faithful to your Trust, shall receive an infinitely better Reward, than all the Riches of this World, or than the Conqueror's withering Garland of Bays, Olive and Flowers in the *Grecian*-Games. It shall be more durable and flourishing than (αμαραντινον) a Crown made of the Flowers of *Amaranth*, which it is said never fade; even an immortal Crown of Honour and Glory, which the Lord will graciously award unto you, as an incorruptible and undefiled Inheritance, that never fades or abates in Worth or Lustre. (*Chap.* i. 4.)

5 *Likewise,* * *ye Younger, submit yourselves unto the Elder. Yea, all* of you *be subject one to another, and be clothed with Humility. For God*

5. My Exhortation, in like Manner, to those of you that are private Church-Members, consisting mostly of the younger Sort of Christians, † as also to Inferiors of every Character, is, that ye be attentive and submissive to the Admonitions, Cautions and Reproofs of those that are of more advanced Years, Wisdom, Experience and Station; and particularly to those that are Elders by Office, as set over you

* *Elder* and *Younger* are sometimes used to signify Persons of *different Age*, as in 1 *Tim.* v. 1. (See the Note there) and at others, *Younger* is a Denomination of *Inferiors* in Distinction from *Superiors*, as in *Luke* xxii. 26. But at other Times, *Elders* is a Title of *Office*, the same with *Bishops* or *Pastors*; and that it is to be so understood, *ver.* 1, is evident from *the Work*, that the Apostle exhorts them to in the following Verses, which is peculiar to Persons of that Character; who also seem to be principally intended by *the Elder* in this Verse, which represents the Duty of the People toward them, in a beautiful Antithesis by the Word *likewise*, (ομοιως) But the *younger*, as far as I find, is never used as a Term of *Office*; and that it is not to be taken in any such Sense here, appears from there being nothing said to them, that relates to *Office-Work*, but only such Things, as are common to them and all private Christians.

resisteth the Proud, and giveth Grace to the Humble.

in the Lord; that ye treat their Persons, Characters and Instructions, as far as they are agreeable to the Word of God, with due Esteem and Reverence: Yea, that all of you, in whatever Relation ye stand, behave with Decency and Respect one towards another. Don't be stiff and abounding in your own Sense; but hearken to solid Arguments and kind Reproofs, from whomsoever they come; and yield one to another, as far as is consistent with your several Ranks and Situations in the Church, and in the natural and civil Life: And, to make these Duties the more easy and pleasant to you, see that ye be endued with unfeigned Humility, and as it were covered all over with it, as a beautiful Ornament to add a visible Lustre to all your other Graces, like a shining upper Garment that spreads over all the rest, and hides their Defects. And to induce you to cultivate this amiable Grace, Remember that a haughty Spirit is so uncreaturely and unchristian-like, so absolutely unbecoming sinful Mortals, and so contrary to your Relation to God, and intire Dependence upon him, that he sets himself, as it were in Battle-array, (αντιτασσεται) against the Proud in Heart, and has them in the utmost Abhorrence; but (δε) shews Favour, and gives a rich Increase of all Grace, to humble Souls, which are his Delight. (See *Prov.* iii. 34, and the Paraphrase on *Jam.* iv. 6.)

6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty Hand of God, that he may exalt you in due Time:

6. Considering therefore what a great God ye have to do with; how intirely ye are at his Disposal, and as nothing before him; how able he is to humble the proud, and exalt the lowly in Heart; and what terrible Judgments he is about to execute in the way of his Providence, as an Emblem of much greater still in the World to come, Yield yourselves up to his Almighty Power, and his sovereign and holy Will, under all the Sufferings and Afflictions which he orders for your Trial: Bow under his Rebukes, that he as a tender Father, who has gained his wise and gracious End by his Chastenings, may have Compassion upon you, and in his Time, (which is always the fittest) may lift you up above all Tribulations, and advance you to a prosperous State in this World, (if that shall be best for you) or, at farthest, to all the Honours and Delights of the World to come.)

7 Casting all your Care upon him, for he careth for you.

7. In the mean while, whatever be the distressing Burdens, or Anxieties, Solicitude, Fears and Cares, relating to yourselves, or Families and Friends, or to the Cause and Interest of Christ, that perplex, cut and wound your Souls, (πασαν την μεριμναν) Commit them all, in the Use of proper Means, by Faith and Prayer, to the Lord, relying on his Power and Goodness for seasonable Relief: For he has all your Concerns, spiritual and temporal, at Heart, and will sustain you; (*Ps.* lv. 22) he will pity, succour, strengthen and comfort you under, and in his Time and Way will ease you of, and give a happy Issue to all your Troubles in your eternal Salvation.

8. Amidst

8 *Be sober, be vigilant: because your Adversary the Devil, as a roaring Lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour.*

8. Amidst all the Difficulties and Dangers of your present State of Warfare, (νήψατε) Labour to maintain a wakeful and sober Temper of Mind in modest Thoughts of yourselves, and in moderating your Affections and Appetites towards earthly Enjoyments; and to be watchful unto Prayer, (*Chap.* iv. 7) and unto the Performance of all the Duties of your Places, and against Temptations, that would draw you into Sin and Apostacy; (1 *Thess.* iii. 5) because your busy and powerful Adversary the Devil, that Accuser of the Brethren, (*Rev.* xii. 10) like a fierce, savage and hungry Lion, greedy of his Prey, is indefatigably restless in his Contrivances and Endeavours, continually *going to and fro in the Earth,* (Job i. 7) to try how far he may be permitted, by Persecutions, Frauds and evil Suggestions, to wound, rend and tear, and ruin immortal Souls; though, blessed be God, he, being under Christ's Controul, cannot compass his Design of destroying all whom he would, or of plucking any one of the Redeemer's Sheep out of his and his Father's Hands. (*John* x. 28, 29.)

9 *Whom resist stedfast in the Faith, knowing that the same Afflictions are accomplished in your Brethren, that are in the World.*

9 As ever ye would overcome this grand Adversary and all his Instruments, make a noble and courageous Stand against him, by stedfastly maintaining the pure Doctrine of Faith and your holy Profession of it, in a firm Dependence on the Power and Grace of Christ to vanquish him; it being most of all important for this Purpose to *take the Shield of Faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery Darts of the Wicked:* (Eph. vi. 16.) And that ye may not be disheartned in the Combate, as though some strange Thing happened to you, (*Chap.* iv. 12.) Remember that the like Measure of Sufferings, in Conformity to Christ, are filled up (ἐπιτελεῖσθαι) and finished by your Christian-Brethren in all Parts of the World, during their short Abode in it; and as *no Temptation has taken you, but such as is common to Man;* so *God is faithful, who will make a Way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* (1 Cor. x. 13.)

10 *But the God of all Grace, who hath called us unto his eternal Glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle* you.

10. Now as God, who is rich in Mercy, and of his own mere Favour is the Fountain and Giver of all Grace, from first to last, suitable to every Time of Trial, has effectually called us by his Word and Spirit to an Inheritance of eternal Glory, which he has promised to, and reserved in Heaven for us, and will keep us unto the Possession of, (*Chap.* i. 4, 5.) thro' the Merit and Mediation of Jesus Christ; and as his Grace is absolutely necessary to enable you to put my Admonitions into Practice, it is my earnest Prayer, under these encouraging and endearing Considerations of him, and in Reflection on my own dreadful Fall, when, being left to myself, I denied my Lord; (*Mark* xv. 68, 70, 71) that after, and by Means of your Tribulations, which will soon be over, and are but *light Afflictions for a Moment,* compared with the *exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory,* (2

Cor. iv. 17.) he would perfect all that concerns you, as to Knowledge and Practice; would establish you immoveably in the Faith and Hope, Profession and Holiness of the Gospel; would *strengthen you with all Might, according to his glorious Power, unto all Patience and Long suffering with Joyfulness*; (Col. i. 11.) and would settle your Souls, with unshaken Peace, Safety and Comfort, on that Foundation which he has laid in *Sion*. (*Chap.* ii. 6.)

11 *To him be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

11. To him, who is the glorious Author of all the Happiness that we have in Hand, or in Hope and Reversion, be cheerfully ascribed, as is most due, all possible Honour, Majesty, Might and Dominion, through all Generations on Earth, and to all Eternity in Heaven. *Amen*; so may it be, and so it shall, as well as ought to be.

12 *By Silvanus a faithful Brother unto you (as I suppose) I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying, that this is the true Grace of God wherein ye stand.*

12. Thus I have wrote a short Epistle, and sent it to you by *Silvanus*, (See the Note on *Acts* xv. 22.) whom I can recommend as a faithful Brother in the Work of the Lord, (ὡς λογίζομαι) as I reckon, upon good Grounds, that he is, and will approve himself to be to you: And my Design, in what I have wrote, is to exhort and encourage you to abide by the Testimony I have herein given for the Confirmation of your Faith; assuring you that it is the true Gospel of the Grace of God, relating to Salvation alone by Jesus Christ; in the Doctrine, Belief and Profession of which, (ἑστήκατε) ye have hitherto stood fast; and by Means of which ye still maintain your Ground, as I trust ye ever will continue to do, through Grace, notwithstanding all the Artifices and Terrors of your Enemies to bring you off from it.

13 *The* Church that is *at Babylon, elected together* with you *saluteth* you; *and* so doth *Marcus my Son.*

13. The Believers that are gathered into a Church-State, and ordinarily assemble for religious Worship at * *Babylon*, where I now am, and that are to be looked upon in a Judgment of Charity, as choice Christians, and as chosen of God to Salvation together with yourselves, send their most affectionate and religious Respects to you; and so doth *John Mark*, (Act. xii. 12.) who, at times, has served with me as a Son in the Work of the Gospel, as well as was converted by my Ministry, and is, like a Son, exceeding dear to me.

14 *Greet ye one another with a Kiss of Charity. Peace* be

14. See to it that ye cultivate a cordial brotherly Love one towards another; in Token of which salute each other with a chaste and friendly Kiss, according to the usual

* Some suppose that by *Babylon* is meant *Rome*, which in a figurative Sense might be called mystical *Babylon*, as in *Rev.* xvii. 5; and 18, 2. with a View to its future Corruption, Superstition, Idolatry and Oppressions under the *Papacy*, when it would be as infamous for all Abominations, as the antient *Babylon* ever was. But *Calvin*, *Piscator*, *Pareus*, *Pearson*, and many others think, as I also do, that the Apostle could have no Reason to conceal *Rome* under this fictitious Name, and that he being the Apostle of the Circumcision was probably at or near *Babylon*, either in *Chaldea*, or in *Egypt*, when he wrote this Epistle; there being many converted Jews, in those Parts. (See Dr. *Lightfoot*'s Sermon on this Text in his Works, Vol. 2. p. 1141, &c.)

with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Custom of Christians in their meetings together. (See the Note on *Rom.* xvi. 16.) May all the Blessings of the Lord, for present and everlasting Happiness, abound towards all and every one of you, wheresoever ye be scattered, that bear a holy Profession of Christ's Name, and are suppo-sed to be vitally united to him, as your only Head and Saviour! To testify my sincere Desire and Hope of this, I say *Amen.*

RECOLLECTIONS.

With what an exemplary Spirit, Conversation and Humbleness of Mind, free from haughty Airs of lording it over God's Heritage; and with what Diligence, Cheerfulness and disinterested Views, should Christian-Pastors inspect, feed and govern the Churches, committed to their ministerial Care by the great Shepherd of the Sheep, who suffered for their Redemption! They have the sweetest Encouragement to be faithful, in Hope of being Partakers of, and crowned with Glory, when he shall be revealed in all the Grandeur of his second Appearing. And how dutiful and becoming is it, that Humility and Respect run through the Behaviour of their People to them, of Inferiors to Superiors, and of all Believers, one towards another, in receiving holy Admonitions! But especially, how ought every one to behave with an absolute, unreserved and the lowest Submission to thegreat God under his Rebukes! He sets himself against the Proud; but shews Favour to theHumble, and encourages them to cast all their solicitous Cares and Troubles upon him, who is the Almighty God, and has a tender Concern for them, and will exalt them in dueseason. And as the Devil is a vigilant, cruel and indefatigable Enemy, like a formidable, ravaging and hungry Lion, seeking, if possible, to devour them, They ought to be constantly ontheir Watch against him, and against all inordinate Affections that would betray them into his Hands; and to withstand and reject all his Temptations, with a stedfast Faith in Christ to bring them off with Victory and Triumph over all the Persecutions and Troubles, which they and their Brethren, in all Places and Ages, are exposed to; but which, comparatively speaking, are light Afflictions and of short Continuance, and at furthest can be only during their uncertain Residence in this present sinful World. But O what absolute Need is there of Help from the God of all Grace to fortify our Souls against them, and to establish, strengthen and settle us on Christ, our sure Foundation, and perfect his good Work in us! What a Mercy is it to stand fast in the Grace of the Gospel! And what high Ascriptions of eternal Honour and Glory are due to the mighty God, for all his Greatness and his Kindness to us! —— Faithful Ministers are to be recommended to the Churches, and Christian-Saluta-tions sent to them; all the Members of which should express their cordial Love, in the best Manner, one towards another: And what better Demonstration of the Sincerity of it can there be, than heartily to wish and pray for Peace, inclusive of every Blessing, to all the Chosen of God and Members of Christ? May they for ever prosper! *Amen.*

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF THE Second Epistle General of the Apostle *PETER*.

In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The PREFACE to the Second Epistle of *PETER*.

THIS second Epistle of the Apostle *Peter* is most generally supposed to have been wrote in View of his near approaching Death, about a Year or two after the other, and three or four Years before the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, to the same Persons, and with much the same Design, for their further Establishment in Faith and Holiness, and for their Caution against Apostacy, by Means of the fiery Trials, that attended them, and were still further coming upon them; and by Means of corrupt Libertine-Teachers, and profane Scoffers at the Promise of Christ's coming to Judgment, as though, because it was not already, it never would be brought to pass, (See the Preface to the first Epistle.)

The divine Authority of this second Epistle of *Peter* is well supported, and defended against the chief Objection that some have made to it, on Account of Difference *in Stile*, by Dr. *Sherlock*, now Bishop of *London*, in his first *Dissertation*, annexed to his Discourses on *Prophecy*.

The Apostle, in Connection with the Inscription and Salutation, represents the comprehensive Blessings of the Gospel, together with the Duties incumbent on those that hope, or pretend to be Partakers of them; and proves his Testimony to Christ by divine Revelation, *Chap*. i. He then warns them of false Teachers, that would arise among them in Opposition to it, and describes their abominable Principles and Practices, and the dreadful Vengeance that should be taken on them, while the Righteous should escape, *Chap*. ii. and shews that, notwithstanding all their perverse Cavils against the Doctrine of Christ's coming to Judgment, of which the Conflagration at *Jerusalem* would be a lively Type and Emblem, he certainly will come in due Season, when the present System of this World shall be intirely dissolved by Fire; and a new refined and glorious Fabric shall be erected for the Habitation of the Saints: In Prospect of all which they ought to be holy in Heart and Life, and progressive in Grace and in the Knowledge of Christ; concluding with an Ascription of Glory to him, *Chap*. iii.

CHAP. I.

The Apoſtle ſalutes them who had obtained like precious Faith, and reminds them of its attending Bleſſings, 1—4. *Exhorts them to add the Exerciſe of various other Graces to their Faith, and encourages them thereto by the happy Iſſues of their ſo doing,* 5—11. *Aſſures them of his Concern to be as aſſiſtant, as poſſible, to them therein, before his approaching Deceaſe,* 12—15. *And confirms the Truth of the Goſpel relating to Chriſt's appearing to Judgment, as it may be gathered from an immediate Teſtimony which came from Heaven in his own and others Hearing, and more directly proved by the inſpired Writings of the Prophets,* 16—21.

TEXT.

1 SIMON Peter a Servant and an Apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt, to them that have obtained like precious Faith with us, through the Righteouſneſs of God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt:

PARAPHRASE.

1. I, who was named *Simon* at my Circumciſion, and ſurnamed *Peter* by our bleſſed Lord, upon my Converſion, and Confeſſion of Faith in him, (*John* i. 42, and *Matth.* xvi. 18.) who called me to be his miniſtring Servant, and honoured me with the Apoſtleſhip; even I, in his Name and by his Authority, now ſend this ſecond Epiſtle to thoſe *Jews* of the Diſperſion, (See the Note on 1 *Epiſt.* i. 1.) who by the ſovereign Diſpoſals of divine Grace, as it were by Lot, (λαχοῦσι) are made Partakers of the Faith of God's Elect, (1 *Epiſt.* i. 2, compared with *Tit.* i. 1.) which, though various in Degrees, is of the ſame excellent Nature and Kind, as to its Cauſes, Acts and Objects, Fruits and Benefits, and is of like great Price in the Sight of God, with that true and unfeigned Faith, which we the Apoſtles, who *have made known unto you the Power and Coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt,* (ver. 16.) and which all of us, who believe to the Saving of our Souls, have obtained, not through any Worthineſs or Ability of our own, but through the Merit of that everlaſting Righteouſneſs, which was wrought out, and brought in, by the Obedience and Sufferings of Jeſus Chriſt, * who is a divine Perſon and the

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* *Through the Righteouſneſs of God and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt* (ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) may be literally render'd *in the Righteouſneſs of our God and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*; and so is to be underſtood as deſcriptive of one and the ſame Perſon, the Article in the *Greek* being prefixed only to the firſt of theſe Titles; (See the Note on *Eph.* i. 1.) but in the next Verſe no Article is prefixed to either of them. Accordingly *the Righteouſneſs* here intended is *the mediatorial* Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, which is often ſtiled *the Righteouſneſs of God.* (See the Note on *Rom.* i. 17.) But if any would underſtand the Word *God* to be in this Place meant of *God the Father,* in *Diſtinction* from our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, it is nevertheleſs to be taken for *the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt*; becauſe, according to our Tranſlation, it is *the Righteouſneſs of God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.* And what can this be, through which precious Faith is obtained, but that Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, which God has accepted, by which his Juſtice is ſatisfied, and for the Sake of which, he gives Faith in it unto Juſtification of Life? And were we to render the Words (ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ) *in the Righteouſneſs* of God and our Saviour, they point us to the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, as the *Object* of Faith, or *that,* in which we believe unto Righteouſneſs. *Rom.* x. 10. But as believing *in the Object* of Faith is ordinarily expreſſed by another Prepoſition, (εἰς) and never, as far as I find, by *this,* (ἐν) I rather chuſe to conſider this, as ſignifying *by* or *through,* (ἐν pro διὰ) as it frequently doth in other Places.

only

only Mediator, as being both our God and Saviour, who purchased all Blessings for us, and on whose *Behalf, it is given unto us to believe on him.* (Phil. i. 29.)

2 *Grace and Peace be multiplied unto you through the Knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,*

2. May all the Blessings of Grace and Peace, of free Favour and clear Discoveries of it, as the Fountain, and Prosperity of every Kind, as its Effect, abound with the richest Variety and Fulness to all and every one of you, through a believing, experimental and increasing Acquaintance with God, as your reconciled and Covenant-God and Father in Christ; as also with Jesus himself, and with what he has done, is doing, and will do, as the common Lord and Saviour of every one of us, who believe in him.

3 *According as his divine Power hath given unto us all Things that* pertain *unto Life and Godliness, through the Knowledge of him that hath called us to Glory and Virtue:*

3. I heartily desire that ye may, and trust that ye shall, be thus abundantly blessed; since Jesus Christ our Lord, (*ver.* 2.) in the Greatness of his Power, which is truely divine, has already, * in his free Favour, bestowed on us all the Blessings that he sees best for us, relating to the present Life, and especially all that are requisite, for maintaining and improving our spiritual Life, till it be perfected in Life eternal, and for every Exercise of Grace in all Acts of Piety toward God, till it be completed in Glory, through the efficacious Knowledge and faithful Acknowledgment (διὰ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως) of him, and of the Father through him, who has called us by the Gospel to an Inheritance of eternal Glory, and to a courageous Profession of our Faith in Hope of that Inheritance; † and has effectually called us to this by a glorious Operation of his mighty Power in us.

4 *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious Promises; that by these ye might be Partakers of the di-*

4. By which divine Persons ‖ (*ver.* 2.) and the glorious Operations of their Power, by Means of the Gospel, are given to us the best of Promises, which are eminently *great*, far beyond our utmost Conceptions, and much more beyond all our Deserts; and they are exceedingly prized by true Believers, and every Way excellent and valuable, grand

* The Particle, δεδωρημένης) here render'd *given*, may be considered as of the *middle Voice*, which admits of a Construction in the *active*, as well as *passive Mood*, and takes off the *grammatical* Difficulty of this Sentence.

† *To Glory and Virtue* (διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀρετῆς) is most strictly speaking, as the Margin has it, *by Glory and Virtue*; and may signify the *glorious Power*, by which we are called to eternal Glory, as *the End*, and to Christian Fortitude as *the Means* of attaining it,

‖ *Whereby* (δι' ὧν) is *plural*, and refers either to *Glory and Virtue*, mentioned at the Close of the preceding Verse, or to *God, and Jesus our Lord* at the Close of *ver.* 2; and so may be rendered either *by which*, or *by whom*. If we refer it to *Glory and Virtue*, the Meaning may be, that these Promises are given to Believers by that glorious Energy or excellent Glory, and efficacious Power that attend the Gospel: Or if we render it *by whom*, and refer it to *God and Jesus our Lord*, it may intimate that these Promises are given to us, both by God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, as the Promise of the Spirit was, *Joh.* xiv. 16, 26, and 16. 7, and *Act.* i. 4. But were we to follow the reading of *Stephanus*, and one or two others of less Note, which puts it in the *singular Number* (δι' οὗ) it may refer either to *God*, or to *Jesus our Lord*, as the Antecedent mentioned *ver.* 2. the nearest of which is *Jesus our Lord*, whom for that Reason I take to be intended in *ver.* 3, according to the Paraphrase upon it.

and

vine Nature, having escaped the Corruption that is in the World through Lust.

and noble (τιμια) in themselves, as they are intirely free and everlasting Promises, ordered in all Things and sure; and as they contain the inestimable Blessings of Life and Godliness, Pardon and Peace, Grace and Glory, and are admirably suited to every Exigence; (ινα) to the End that by an Application and Fulfilment of these Promises, in all their Variety, Riches and Extent, ye might have such Communion with God (γενησθε κοινωνοι) in his Holiness, which on Account of its Resemblance of him, Derivation from him, Tendency toward him, and Complacency in him, may be called a divine Nature; † ye having, as an Introduction to it, and as a Part and Evidence of it, renounced and fled away, with Vigour and Abhorrence, (αποφυγοντες) from all the corrupt Principles and Practices, that spread and prevail among the Men of this World, through the Power of their depraved Inclinations, and inordinate Affections to carnal Things.

5 *And besides this, giving all Diligence, add to your Faith Virtue, and to Virtue Knowledge,*

5. And for this Reason, (αυτο τουτο) or in Consideration of what ye are already Partakers of, ye ought to use the utmost Care and Diligence for a Progression in every Grace and Duty; as for Instance, In humble Dependence on divine Power and promised Assistances, (*ver.* 3, 4.) Add to your precious Faith a noble Christian-Courage in its Profession and Defence; and to your Christian-Courage, add still further Advances in spiritual understanding, Wisdom and Prudence.

6 *And to Knowledge Temperance, and to Temperance Patience, and to Patience Godliness,*

6. And to this sort of excellent Knowledge, add a due Regulation and Government of your Passions and Appetites, with a Weanedness of Heart from the alluring Objects of Flesh and Sense; and to the Moderation of your Affections to earthly Things, add Patience under all Tribulations, with a meek and quiet Spirit, and an intire Resignation to the Will of your heavenly Father; and to your Christian-Patience, add all Exercises of Piety and Devotion, in a holy Reverence of God and conscientious Attention to every Ordinance of divine Worship, and all religious Duties, according to his Word, from a Principle of Love to him, in Obedience to his Command, and for his Glory.

7 *And to Godliness brotherly Kindness, and to brotherly Kindness Charity.*

7. And to your Religion toward God, add an affectionate Love, Tenderness, Sympathy and Compassion, with every suitable Fruit and Expression of them, toward your fellow Christians, as Brethren in the Lord; and to this brotherly Kindness, add a universal Benevolence to all

† *The divine Nature* (θειας φυσεως) might have been much better rendered *a divine Nature*, the Expression in the *Greek*, being without the Article, most naturally carries this Sense; and that divine Nature, which we are said to be Partakers of, is not by a Participation of *the divine Essence*, which is incommunicable to any Creature; nor is it by a *personal Union* with the *divine Nature*, as the human Nature of Christ is; but it is by a *divine Impression* of God's own *holy Image* upon us, or by a *holy Principle* infused into us, which introduces a contrary Form to that, which we had before by the *Corruption that is in the World through Lust.*

Mankind,

Mankind, as Partakers of the same human Nature with yourselves, endeavouring to promote their temporal and spiritual Welfare, whether they be Friends, or Enemies: (See *Gal.* vi. 10.) These are Things of great Importance, and will turn to the best Account.

8 *For if these Things be in you and abound, they make* you that ye shall *neither* be *barren, nor unfruitful in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

8. For if these excellent Graces be found in you, and be lively and enlarged in their Exercise, they will make you thriving Christians; so that ye will neither be slothful nor inactive (αργοι) in the Concerns of your Souls, and in the Duties of your Christian-Profession; nor useless and unprofitable, and, like barren Trees, destitute of holy Fruits, suitable to the Nature of your fiducial Knowledge and Acknowledgment of Christ, as our only Lord and Saviour; which will make you vigorous, diligent and abounding in every good Word and Work, relating to God, yourselves and others.

9 *But he that lacketh these Things is Blind, and cannot see far off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old Sins.*

9. But whatever Professor of Christianity he be, that is destitute of the forementioned Graces, or so remarkably deficient in them, as to have no Experience of their Exercise, like what is sensibly present to him, (ω μη παρεστι) let his Pretences to Light and Knowledge be ever so great, he is still in spiritual Darkness, like a blind Man, or like one who winks hard, and shuts his Eyes against the Light; or at most (μυωπαζων) he has only a glimmering, confused and short Sight, which cannot discover distant Objects, nor penetrate into the Beauty and Glory of Gospel-Truths, or of Christ and Holiness; nor plainly discern the Reality and Importance of future Things, which are as far out of his View, as if he were purblind, though they are made manifest in the Word of God, and in the Light of Faith; and will soon be present in all the Misery, or Happiness of the eternal World: And he has thrown off a Sense of the Obligations, End and Design of his solemn Profession, as signified by his Baptism, of being purified from the Sins he formerly indulged; and is careless and unconcerned about being cleansed by the Blood and Spirit of Christ from the Iniquities, which for a great while, even from his Birth, had reigned over him. (*Isa.* xlviii. 8.)

10 *Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give Diligence to make your Calling and Election sure: For, if ye do these Things, ye shall never Fall:*

10. Considering therefore the wide Difference there is between real and nominal Christians, and how many take up with the Name, without the Thing, Let it excite you, my dear Brethren, to be the more earnestly careful, in the Use of all Means of Grace, to obtain a full Assurance, in the Light of the Spirit, of your effectual Calling, and thereby of your having been eternally chosen of God to Salvation; since your Election cannot be known but by its Fruits in your Calling, which are the first Evidence of it,* and

* The Scripture usually speaks of *Election* and *Calling* in their proper Order, as the first was from Eternity, and the other is in Time; one the Cause, and the other the Fruit or Effect, according to the Account given of them in *Rom.* viii. 29, 30. *Eph.* i. 3—7, and 2 *Thes.* ii. 13, 14. But *here* the Apostle

and from which it may certainly be concluded. See to it then, that this be a firm and settled Point with you, by its being manifested in such holy Effects, as will be a genuine and undoubted Proof of it: For if ye live in the Exercise of the Graces but now specified, (*ver.* 5.—7.) whatever Trials, Slips and Infirmities may attend you, ye shall never stumble so as to fall off from Christ, or apostatize from your Faith in him and holy Profession of his Name; nor ever fall into Error or Sin to your Perdition, or fall short of eternal Life.

11 *For so an Entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly, into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

11. For while in this Way and Manner of making out your Election by your effectual Calling, ye add (ἐπιχορηγήσατε, *to your Faith Virtue*, &c. (*ver.* 5.) ye shall not only get safe to Heaven, but shall have an abundant Encrease of Hope and Joy in your Way to it; and, when ye come to die, a triumphant Entrance shall be richly supplied and added to you (πλουσίως ἐπιχορηγηθήσεται) into all the sublime Dignity, Affluence and Delights of the eternal Kingdom of our great Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, which he has purchased and taken Possession of for us, who are interested in him, and whom he *will receive to himself, that where he is, there we may be also.* (Joh. 14. 3.)

12 *Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in Remembrance of these Things, though ye know them, and be established in the present Truth.*

12. As these are Things of the greatest Consequence, I therefore cannot be unconcerned about reminding you of them, and pressing them upon you, once and again, in order to your being suitably affected with them and putting them into Practice; though I am well satisfied that ye already are acquainted with them, and confirmed in a Belief of the Truth of the Gospel, according to the present Dispensation of it; and particularly of the Truth, which I am now recommending to you about the Necessity of universal Holiness, in order to your joyful *Entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, and which in this Day of Trial and Affliction eminently calls for a present Attention to it.

13 *Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this Tabernacle, to stir you up, by* putting you *in Remembrance;*

13. Yea, so great is its Importance, and so nearly are ye concerned in it, that I count it fit and proper, and (δίκαιον) a Piece of Justice to Truth and you, as long as I continue in the Body, (which is like a moveable Tent, set up for a little Time, and soon to be taken down again)

Apostle inverts the Order, and puts our Calling *first*, because his immediate Design in this Passage was, not so much to discourse of the Things themselves, as *of our Knowledge of them*, and Assurance concerning our *own Interest* in them; and this Knowledge can be obtained only in this Order, by ascending from the Effect to the Cause, from our Calling to our Election; and proving *this* by *that*: For the Election of one or another particular Person is an intire secret in the Heart of God, till it breaks forth, and is made known by its Effects. And therefore it is a vain, fruitless, unwarrantable and preposterous Attempt, for any Persons to puzzle themselves about *their own* Election, before they are *effectually called*, or have Evidence in themselves that they are so. But if their *effectual Calling* be clearly made out, they may certainly conclude from thence that they were *elected*; since all, and none but the Elect are so called: For otherwise their being called could not be a sure Proof, that they were elected, which is the very Point in the Apostle's View.

not barely to inform you of these Things, which ye may have little or no need of; but earnestly to excite you to consider and practise them, by repeatedly reminding you of them, lest at any Time, through the Treachery of your Memories and the Heedlesness of your Spirits, ye let them slip and make no proper Use of them.

14 *Knowing that shortly I must put off* this *my Tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.*

14. This I am the more desirous to do while Opportunity lasts, as being well assured, that the earthly House of this Tabernacle will quickly be dissolved, when I must quit my Abode in it; even as our dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ has manifested to me, that the Time is now at hand, when I must seal my Testimony to him, according to his former Intimation about the Manner of Death, by which in old Age I should glorify God. (*John* xxi. 18, 19.)

15 *Moreover, I will endeavour, that ye may be able after my Decease, to have these Things always in Remembrance.*

15. And as I am very solicitous for your being established in, and deeply possessed of these interesting Truths, not merely during my Continuance in the Body; so I shall make it my Study and Labour, for the little Time I have to live, to inculcate them upon you, as I have done by committing them to Writing in my former Epistle, and now do in this, that ye may ever retain a Remembrance and lively Sense of them, after I am dead and gone to a better World, by a Departure (ἐξόδου) of my Soul from the Body, and from all the Sins and Sorrows of Time, to a perfectly holy and blessed Eternity.

16 *For we have not followed cunningly devised Fables, when we made known unto you the Power and Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were Eye-witnesses of his Majesty.*

16. For we, the Apostles of Christ, who publish the Gospel of the Grace of God, have not therein devised sophistical and idle Tales of our own Heads, like the traditional fabulous Stories, that abound among *Jews* and *Gentiles*; nor have we, like them, propagated vain Conceits, by artful and cunning Methods of deceiving, when we declared unto you in Preaching, as I also have done in Writing, (1 *Epist.* i. 13, and iv. 5) the Things that relate to the divine Authority, Power and Glory, with which our Lord Jesus Christ will come to judge the World at the last Day; but several of us, *James* and *John* together with myself, were present at his Transfiguration on the Mount, which was a lively Emblem and Prefiguration of his final glorious Appearing; and were Eye witnesses of the illustrious Majesty and Grandeur, in which he then shone, like himself, as with the Meridian-Brightness of the Sun; and was eminently owned of his heavenly Father. (See the Note on *Matth.* xvii. 2.)

17 *For he received from God the Father, Honour and Glory, when there came such a Voice to him from the excellent Glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

17. For, at that very Time, he received an honourable and glorious Testimony from God the Father himself, which put the highest Dignity upon his Character, as his proper Son and the true Messiah, when an audible articulate Voice was directed immediately to him from the *Shechinah*, which then appeared as a magnificent Symbol of the divine Presence, (See the Notes on *Matth.* xvii. 5, and *Luke* ix. 26) and from which God the Father, who is infinitely glorious in

in himself, and dwells in the inaccessible Light and Glory of the upper World, distinctly pronounced these Words, *This is my beloved Son in whom I well pleased*, that is, This Jesus is by way of Eminence my most dearly beloved eternal Son, in whose Person and Office, Undertakings and Performances, I am exceedingly delighted, as I also am with all those, that are found in him by vital Union with him; and so cloathed with his Righteousness, and washed from their Sins in his Blood.

18 *And this Voice which came from Heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy Mount.*

18. And this Voice, in which these remarkable Words were uttered immediately by the God of Heaven, from the Cloud of Glory in the Region of the Air, all of us then present distinctly heard with a clear Understanding of its Import, when we attended our glorious Lord at the very Time of his Transfiguration on Mount *Tabor*, which was sanctified or made relatively holy, for the Time being, by the divine Presence; as Mount *Horeb* was, when the Lord appeared to *Moses* in the Bush that burned, and was not consumed. (*Exod.* iii. 4, 5.)

19 *We have also a more sure Word of Prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a Light that shineth in a dark Place, until the Day dawn, and the Day-Star arise in your Hearts:*

19. And beside this illustrious Attestation to our blessed Lord, which may well be considered as an *emblematical* and *presumptive* Notification of his future appearing with divine Power and Majesty, (*ver.* 16) * We have a still more *direct* Proof of it, as it may be more assuredly gathered from the express Declarations even of the Old Testament, (*ver.* 20, 21) which are confirmed in the New, (See *Ps.* xcvi. 13, *Dan.* vii. 13, 14, *Matth.* xiii. 40—43, and xvi. 27, and xxv. 31—46, and xxvi. 64, *John* v. 28, 29, *Acts* i. 11, and xvii. 31, 2 *Cor.* v. 10, 1 *Thess.* i. 10, 2 *Thess.* i. 7—10, 2 *Tim.* iv. 1, and 1 *Pet.* i. 9—13) unto which Testimony of inspired Prophecy, relating to this very Point, ye ought carefully to attend, so as to be guided and determined by it, as a Light that, like a Lamp in a dark Place, shines amidst the

* *We have a more sure Word of Prophecy* is not to be understood, as though the Word of Prophecy were in itself more certain, than the glorious Attestation which was given to Christ from Heaven in the Sight and Hearing of the Apostles; or as though *this*, as far as it went and was reported by the Apostles, were not to be as fully credited as *that*. But it was a more certain and indisputable Proof of Christ's *second appearing with Power and great Glory*, than could be gathered from what passed in the Mount, according to the ingenious and judicious Sense, in which Dr. *Sherlock*, now Bishop of *London*, has taken it, in his *Discourse on Prophecy*, pag. 20—22, where he observes, "that *the Power* and *Coming* of our Lord *Jesus Christ* is the only Point here in Question; and so it is, as though the Apostle should say, It is a great Presumption that Christ shall come in *Glory*, that we have already seen him *glorified*; and it is a further Evidence of his *Power* to deliver his Servants, since God has openly declared him to be his *well-beloved Son*. But to assure us that he will indeed *so come*, and *so use* his Power, *we have a more sure Word of Prophecy*: i. e. we have the very Word of God, (speaking by his Prophets) to whom all *Futurity is known*, to assure us of the Certainty of this *future* Event."—— But *Gherard* supposes that the *Comparative*, *surer*, may be here used for the *positive* Degree, *sure*, as in the *Greek* of *Acts* xvii. 21; Or rather he, *Beza* and *Piscator* take the *comparative* to be put for the *superlative* Degree, as in the *Greek* of *Acts* xxv. 10, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 13, and xv. 19: and so no Comparison may be here designed, but only a strong Assertion of the Certainty or Firmness of the prophetic Testimony. See also *Glassius*'s Philologia Sacra, pag. 428. where he gives several other Instances of the *comparative* being put for the *superlative* Degree, as particularly in *Matth.* xi. 11, xviii. 1, and xiii. 32; and tells us that some refer 2 *Pet.* i. 19 to this Change of the Degrees of Comparison.

Darkness of Judaism and Heathenism, and of all carnal Hearts; and *the Darkness comprehends it not:* (John i. 5.) It is your Duty and Interest to study, and build your Faith upon this, till the Day of Christ's glorious appearing shall begin to break; and till he, as *the Sun of Righteousness, the Day-Star from on high,* and *the bright and Morning-Star,* (Malach. iv. 2, Luke i. 78, and Rev. xxii. 16) shall arise in full Lustre, and shed such a transcendent Light in your Souls, as shall intirely dissipate all Obscurity, or Doubt, about what was intimated by the Vision on the Mount, and is further confirmed by the sure Word of Prophecy.

20 *Knowing this first, that no Prophecy of the Scripture is of any private Interpretation.*

20. In the mean while, ye may confidently depend upon the prophetic Testimony to Christ's future glorious Appearing, as being, first of all, well satisfied, that no Prophecy contained in the sacred Writings of the Old Testament, and confirmed by the New, is the Product of any Man's own Invention, according to his private Fancy, Opinion or Judgment about it, the Meaning of which the antient Prophets themselves often did not throughly understand. (1 *Pet.* i. 10, 11.)

21 *For the Prophecy came not in old Time by the Will of Man: But holy Men of God spake* as they were *moved by the Holy Ghost.*

21. For none of those Prophecies were delivered, and committed to Writing, in former Times, by the Contrivance, Will and Pleasure of the Prophets, according to what they, as Men, thought might be for the best: But those sacred Pen-men, whom God sanctified for himself, and for his Use and Service, spake and wrote only such Things therein, as were suggested to them by the Holy Spirit, whose immediate Dictate excited them to utter the Ideas, which he raised in their Minds, and to express them in Words, that should convey the true Sense of them, according to the further Explication, which he has now given of them in New Testament-Light.

RECOLLECTIONS.

It is Honour enough for any Gospel-Minister to be, what the Apostles counted themselves, the Servants of Jesus Christ; and they, who are truly such, cannot but heartily wish, that Grace and Peace, inclusive of every Blessing, may be multiplied to all that have obtained like precious Faith with themselves, through the infinite Merit of the Righteousness of God their Saviour, and through the Knowledge of him, who has effectually called them by the Gospel to a glorious Inheritance, and to a free and holy Profession of their Faith and Hope, till they enter with Triumph into his everlasting Kingdom. How precious are the Promises, by which Believers are made Partakers of a divine Nature, in a holy Conformity to God, and Departure from all the Wickedness of this World, that proceeds from the Corruption of Mens own Hearts! But O of how great Concern is it, to give all Diligence, by divine Assistance, to add to our Faith every Christian-Grace and lively Exercise of it! This will make and prove us to be active Believers, whose Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour is not a lifeless Notion, but will produce substantial and assuring Evidences of our effectual Calling, and consequently of our Election, from whence it flows; and will be the Means of preserving us from utter Apostacy and falling short of Heaven. But he, who is destitute of all this, is still wandering in the Dark, and has forgot his Profession of being purified from his former Sins. What need therefore have Gospel-Professors of being often put in Mind of these important

Things,

Things, though they already know them! And what Care should Christ's ministring Servants take to repeat them on all Occasions, that they may be remembred and practised, when they are dead, and gone to Heaven; especially considering that their Souls must soon depart from their Bodies, which are the frail Tabernacles of their present Abode! And with what Confidence may they recommend and inculcate such Things, as are founded on the Testimony of God himself by his Apostles and holy Prophets, relating to Christ, whom he declared, with an audible Voice from the excellent Glory on the Mount, to be his beloved Son, in whom he is well-pleased; and relating to the divine Majesty and Power, with which he will gloriously appear at his coming to judge the World! These are not cunningly devised Fables; but unquestionable Truths, as contained in the infallible Word of God, which was wrote, not according to the private Will and Fancy of Men, but by the Inspiration of his Spirit; and ought to be attended to as a Light, which he has given to guide us through all our Darkness in this World, till, by the rising of the Sun of Righteousness upon our Souls, we arrive at the unclouded Light and Glory of the World to come. O may the blessed Author of the holy Scriptures lead us into the Knowledge of his Mind and Will in them, and make us wise to our own Salvation!

CHAP. II.

The Apostle cautions Believers against false Teachers, whom he describes by their pernicious Principles and Influence, 1—3. *Shews the Certainty of their Punishment, from the Examples of the fallen Angels, of the old World, and of* Sodom *and* Gomorrah, *which the Godly shall escape, as* Lot *did out of* Sodom, 4—9. *And gives a black Account at large of these Seducers, as they were aggravatedly wicked under high Pretences to Liberty and Purity,* 10—22.

TEXT.

1 BUT *there were false Prophets also among the People, even as there shall be false Teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable Heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift Destruction.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. BUT as there were true and holy Prophets of the Lord, who (as has been observed *Chap.* i. 21) wrote under the Inspiration of his Spirit, and are to be attended to; so there were likewise false Pretenders to this Character, who rose up in former Times among the People of *Israel* to seduce them, and were to be guarded against; and this is the Case under the Gospel-State, according to the Predictions of our Lord and his inspired Apostles. (*Matth.* xxiv. 11, *Acts* xx. 30, 1 *Cor.* xi. 19, and 1 *Tim.* iv. 1.) There are and will be false Teachers rising up among you of the *Jewish* Nation, who under various Pretences will covertly and craftily introduce the most pernicious heretical Tenets, which tend to the eternal Destruction of those that broach, and those that receive them, as they, both doctrinally and practically, renounce the Wisdom, Authority, Grace and Holiness of their Lord and Master, as discovered in the Gospel-Revelation of him, whom they boast of, as the God that redeemed or delivered them out of *Egypt* with a mighty

mighty Hand †, and has through a Succession of many Ages signally owned as his professing People, and wrought many temporal Salvations for; and so, by acting the most ungrateful, abominable and self-condemning Part, they constructively deny him, and pull down speedy and utter Destruction upon their own guilty Heads, which may overtake them before they are aware. (1 *Thess.* v. 3.)

2 *And many shall follow their pernicious Ways, by reason of whom the Way of Truth shall be evil spoken of.*

2. And such is the natural Depravity of Mankind, and the Enmity of their carnal Hearts against God and Godliness, that many Professors of Christ's Name, who have not the Grace of God in Truth, will be seduced into their Destructions, (απωλειαις) and follow their detestable Example in licentious Principles and Practices, on Account of which the Truth of the Gospel, and the Way of Holiness and Happiness according to it, (βλασφημηθησεται) will be blasphemously spoken of by its Enemies.

3 *And through Covetousness shall they with feigned Words make Merchandise of you: Whose Judgment now of a long Time lingereth not, and their Damnation slumbereth not.*

3. And, from covetous Reaches after worldly Gain, these Seducers will use abundance of deceitful flattering Speeches, which have no Truth or Sincerity in them, and are only a Cover of their base Designs to make a Prey of you, that they may get some secular Advantage by you, as Merchants do by their Traffic: But theirs is a dreadful Merchandise, whose righteous Condemnation has been of old determined of God. (*Jude.* ver. 4. see the Note there) to be executed for their flagrant Iniquities, in due Season without Delay; and whose everlasting Destruction hastens apace, and soon will certainly come upon them with a Vengeance, (*Deut.* xxxii. 34, 35) as may be concluded from the Course of God's Dealings with former Transgressors.

4 *For if God spared not the Angels that sinned, but cast* them *down to Hell, and delivered* them *into Chains of Darkness, to be reserved unto Judgment;*

4. For if (as we well know) God in his awful Justice did not shew any Favour, or abate the Punishment due to that higher Rank of originally more excellent Creatures, the Angels themselves, who, through Pride and Envy, transgressed the Law, which God had given them for the Trial of their Obedience, by swerving from its Precepts; but for their first Sin hurled them all down with righteous Indignation from their blissful, honourable and holy Habitation in Heaven

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† *The Lord that brought them* may, with the greatest Propriety, be here understood of God, as the providential Governor and Deliverer of *Israel*: For the Word (δεσπότης) here render'd *the Lord* is applied to God, when spoken of by way of Distinction from our Lord Jesus in that parallel Place, *Jud.* ver. 4, and is several Times used in other Parts of the New Testament with a Reference to the *Father*; but, as far as I find, never to *the Son*: And his having *bought them*, seems to relate to the *temporal* Deliverances he had wrought for *Israel*, as his professing People, with a Reference to *Deut.* xxxii. 6, where speaking of them, as his visible Church, it is said, *Is not he thy Father that has bought thee?* And, in the Passage before us, there is no Intimation of *the Death of Christ*, or of Redemption *by his Blood*, as there usually is when Redemption *by Price* is intended.—Or if it be supposed to relate to the *Purchase*, which Christ made of these Persons, that they might be eternally saved, it must be understood only according to the Judgment of Charity, during their former credible Profession of his Name: Or his having *bought them* may only signify his having *purchased a Dominion over them* in such a Manner, as may best answer the Ends of his Kingdom which rules over all; he being Lord of the Quick and the Dead, Good and Bad, and his universal Lordship being founded on Redemption by his Blood.

(*Jud.* ver. 6) into ſome unknown Place of Miſery, which is called the *Deep*, and *the bottomleſs Pit*; (Luke viii. 31, and Rev. ix. 1, 2, and xi. 7) and committed them, like condemned Criminals, to ſafe Cuſtody, as though bound with the ſtrongeſt Chains in a Dungeon of Darkneſs, Horror and Deſpair, to be ſecured for full Torment againſt the general Judgment of the great Day.

5 *And ſpared not the old World, but ſaved Noah the eighth* Perſon, *a Preacher of Righteouſneſs, bringing in the Flood upon the World of the Ungodly*;

5. And if the holy God had no Pity on the wicked Generation of Men of the ſame common Nature with ourſelves, in the antediluvian Age of the World, that deſpiſed and diſregarded all his ſolemn and gracious Warnings with great Long-ſuffering and Patience; but if, while he ſaved *Noah*,* who was the eighth at the Head of them that were preſerved in the Ark, (1 *Pet.* iii. 20) and was by divine Commiſſion a faithful Preacher of moral Righteouſneſs, Repentance and Reformation, and of the Righteouſneſs which is by Faith, of which he himſelf was an Heir, (*Heb.* xi. 7) and a Preacher of the righteous Judgments of God, which would deſtroy that impenitent, unbelieving and diſobedient World; If God, I ſay, at the appointed Seaſon, ſwallowed up the whole of that perverſe Set of People in the univerſal Deluge of Water which drowned them, one and all, how great ſoever their Numbers were:

6 *And turning the Cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into Aſhes, condemned* them *with an Overthrow, making* them *an Enſample unto thoſe that after ſhould live ungodly*:

6. And if in like terrible Righteouſneſs, and executed by a contrary Element, he rained Fire and Brimſtone from Heaven upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, together with *Admah* and *Zeboim*, (Gen. xix. 24, 25, and Deut. xxix. 23) to the utter Subverſion of thoſe Cities, reducing them, with all their profligate Inhabitants, to Aſhes in the moſt dreadful Cataſtrophe, (καταστροφῇ) to which he juſtly condemned them for their abominable Wickedneſs; and ſo ſet them forth as an Example of his Indignation and Wrath, and as a Type or Pattern (ὑπόδειγμα) of the final Conflagration and eternal Fire, which ſhall conſume all the Wicked of the Earth, (*Jude*, ver. 7) that it might be a Warning to all reſolute Sinners of ſucceeding Ages, who perſiſt in their Iniquities, and caſt off his Fear; and might ſhew them what they muſt expect at his Hand:

7 *And delivered juſt Lot, vexed with the filthy Converſation of the Wicked*:

7. And if, in the Midſt of all the flaming Deſolation of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, the gracious God put a ſpecial Mark of kind Diſtinction upon his righteous Servant *Lot*, whom he plucked as a Brand out of the Fire; and ſo [illegible] with a Sort of merciful Violence reſcued him from it, (*Gen* xix. 16) who had been ſorely grieved, fatigued and oppreſſed in his

* *Noah* was the *Tenth* from *Adam*, as appears by the Genealogy in *Luke* iii. 36—38; and therefore the *Eighth* Perſon cannot mean the Eighth from him, but the Eighth of them, or the Head of the Eight, that were ſaved in the Ark, which were his Wife, and his three Sons and their Wives, together with himſelf, for whoſe ſake they were preſerved, *Gen.* vi. 8, 10, compared with *Chap.* vii. 7. And therefore the Apoſtle might particularly mention him as the *Eighth*. (See alſo the Note on 1 *Pet.* iii. 20.)

own

own pious Soul at the vile, diſſolute, laſcivious, obſcene and unnatural Behaviour of that perverſe and wicked People:

8 *(For that righteous Man dwelling among them, in ſeeing and hearing, vexed his righteous Soul from Day to Day with* their *unlawful Deeds)*

8. (For this holy, juſt and good Man, who dwelt among them, and daily ſaw and heard what ſhocking Crimes were openly committed in the Courſe of their flagitious Lives, exceedingly laid them to Heart, and with the bittereſt Anguiſh (ἐβασάνιζεν) even tormented his holy Soul in mournful Reflections on their abominably filthy and unjuſt Actions, which were contrary to all the Laws of God and Nature.)

9 *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of Temptations, and to reſerve the Unjuſt unto the Day of Judgment to be puniſhed:*

9. As certainly as theſe are all undoubted Facts, we may from thence with equal Certainty conclude, to the Joy of the Saints, and the Terror of the Wicked, that, be the Corruptions of the Age ever ſo great, and the Snares, Troubles and Dangers of his People ever ſo many, the great Lord of Heaven and Earth, whoſe Underſtanding is infinite, and Power uncontroulable, and whoſe Kingdom rules over all, perfectly knows at what Time, in what Manner, and by what Means, to extricate thoſe out of all their Trials and Afflictions, who like *Noah* and *Lot* are religious Worſhippers of him; and he will aſſuredly do it in his Love and Faithfulneſs to them: And he equally knows how to hold the Wicked and Ungodly in ſafe Cuſtody, like the fallen Angels, (*ver*.4.) under his ſupreme Dominion, till he ſhall bring them forth, as condemned Criminals, in the Day of the final Judgment, to be puniſhed according to the Iniquity of their Hearts and Lives.

10 *But chiefly them that walk after the Fleſh in the Luſt of Uncleanneſs, and deſpiſe Government. Preſumptuous* are they, *ſelf-willed, they are not afraid to ſpeak evil of Dignities:*

10. But eſpecially he knows how to reſerve, and will ſeverely deal with thoſe impious Seducers, (*ver.* 1) who, anſwerable to their corrupt Principles, live according to the carnal Dictates and Deſires of their ſenſual Minds, indulging themſelves, and going on without Reſtraint, in a Gratification of their impure and laſcivious Inclinations, and Sodomitical Practices; (*Jud.* ver. 7, 8) and who inſolently pour Contempt upon all regular Government and Authority over them, that would put a Check upon their Vices: They are a daring, refractory, diſobedient and headſtrong Sort of People, ever ſeeking to pleaſe themſelves, and have no Law to govern them but their own Will; nor do they ſcruple or fear to ſpeak reproachfully, not only of the Apoſtles and Miniſters of Chriſt†, but of

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† *Deſpiſing Government, and ſpeaking Evil of Dignities,* ſome think refers to the vile Notions, that the *Nicholaitans,* and the *Gnoſtics* after them, vented about angelical Powers, and that the Apoſtle in the next Verſe refers to the *good Angels not bringing a railing Accuſation* againſt the apoſtate Spirits, which I have there glanced at by pointing to what the Apoſtle *Jude* ſays (*ver.* 9) about the *Arch-Angel's not bringing a railing Accuſation againſt the* Devil; though *that* ſeems to be an *additional* Thought, and not the ſame with our Apoſtle's; and it appears moſt natural to me to underſtand him in this Verſe, as deſcribing Perſons, whoever they were, that deſpiſed *civil Government,* and ſpoke evil of *earthly Dignities,* in Oppoſition to which he in the next Verſe alledges the contrary Conduct of the good Angels that *bring no railing Accuſation againſt them,* with whom he may, poſſibly, include *eccleſiaſtical* Rulers. (See the Note on *Jud.* ver. 8.)

civil

civil Magistrates that are advanced to high Dignity, and worthy of Honour, as they are set over them, and are the Ordinance of God to regulate and controul their exorbitant Passions, Appetites and Manners.

11 *Whereas Angels, which are greater in Power and Might, bring not railing Accusation against them before the Lord.*

11. They herein act a very contrary Part to the holy Angels that *excel in Strength, and do the Commandments of God, hearkning to the Voice of his Word*, (Ps. ciii. 20.) and are superior in Dignity and Might to these vain Boasters, or to any earthly Potentates; and yet they, considering civil Magistrates as the Ordinance of God for Good, (See the Notes on *Rom.* xiii. 1—4.) have such a Reverence of him, and are so generous and benevolent to them, as not to revile their Persons and Government, or bring a slanderous Censure upon them (βλάσφημον κρίσιν) in the Presence of God: Nay, even *Michael the Archangel, when contending with the Devil* himself, used no opprobrious bitter Language against him. (*Jud.* ver. 9.)

12 *But these, as natural brute Beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak Evil of the Things that they understand not, and shall utterly perish in their own Corruption;*

12. But these presumptuous Despisers of Government, (*ver.* 10.) instead of imitating the good Angels in the Decorum of their Conduct, are irrational, furious and brutish in following their own sensual Inclinations, like Beasts of Prey that are void of Understanding, and naturally inclined to Rapine and Destruction, and are made to be taken and destroyed by Men, for whose Use they were originally created: These act at such a monstrous Rate, as to reproach and rail against Persons and Things, both of a civil and religious Nature, whose Use and Excellence they neither know, nor approve of; and they shall be utterly destroyed for, and by Means of, the indulged Corruptions of their own Minds and Manners.

13 *And shall receive the Reward of Unrighteousness, as they that count it Pleasure to riot in the Day-time. Spots* they are *and Blemishes, sporting themselves with their own Deceivings, while they feast with you;*

13. And they shall reap the bitter Fruit and Wages, which are justly due to all their complicated Wickedness, as those that glory and take Delight in voluptuous and vicious Courses, which they impudently pursue in open Day-light, instead of being ashamed of them as *Works of Darkness*, which People, that have the least Grain of Modesty left, dare venture to practise only in the Night: (1 *Thess.* v. 7.) They are a Reproach and Scandal to the Christian-Name, gratifying their luxurious Inclinations with their own deceived and deceiving Devices, whereby they cunningly insinuate themselves into your favourable Opinion of them, and please themselves with their having cheated and imposed upon you, while, under Pretences of Love and Friendship, they socially partake in ordinary or religious Feasts with you. (*Jud.* ver. 12. See the Note there.)

14 *Having Eyes full of Adultery, and that cannot cease from Sin; beguiling unstable Souls: An Heart they have, exercised*

14. Their Eyes are continually and insatiably employ'd in wanton adulterous Glances, to discover their own lewd Inclinations, and excite the like in others, and to find out proper Objects for inflaming and gratifying the vilest Affections; and so propense are they to all Iniquity, that they know not how to refrain from contriving to commit it, or endea-

with covetous Practices; cursed Children:

endeavouring to draw others into it; and so by their Inticements, in Word and Deed, they ensnare and catch poor unguarded Souls, that are not established in the Truth and Holiness of the Gospel, nor fortified with Grace against their guileful Arts. Their Hearts are intirely engaged in Contrivances how to compass their covetous Desires after the Riches, Honours and defiling Pleasures of this World: They are Children of Wrath, devoted to Destruction under the Curse of God's righteous and holy Law, whose Vengeance is ready to be executed upon them.

15 *Which have forsaken the right Way, and are gone astray, following the Way of Balaam* the Son *of Bosor, who loved the Wages of Unrighteousness;*

15. And God may justly abandon and abhor them, and give them up to utter Ruin, who have renounced the only true Way of Salvation by Jesus Christ, and of walking before God in Faith and holy Obedience, according to his Mind and Will; and have wandered from the Path of Truth and Duty into the Ways of Sin and Error, that lead to eternal Misery, as they tread in the very Steps of that infamously wicked Prophet, *Balaam* the Son of *Beor*, (Numb. xxii. 5.) which in the *Babylonian* Dialect is pronounced *Bosor*; and follow his detestable Example, who, notwithstanding all his fair Pretences to the contrary, hanker'd after, and had a Heart in Love with the iniquitous Rewards, which *Balak* offered him, that he might unrighteously curse God's *Israel*.

16 *But was rebuked for his Iniquity. The dumb Ass speaking with Man's Voice, forbad the Madness of the Prophet.*

16. But he was severely reproved for his Sin in going about to transgress the positive Command of the Lord, * and *that* by a brute Beast, the Ass he rode upon, which, though naturally a dumb Creature, was miraculously enabled to speak with an articulate Voice like a Man; which was a strong Indication to the infatuated Prophet, that he ought by no Means to have persisted in his mad and foolish Attempt, which could only turn to his own Confusion. (*Numb.* xxii. 22—32.)

17 *These are Wells without Water, Clouds that are carried with a Tempest; to whom the Mist of Darkness is reserved for ever.*

17. To give a little further Account of the false Teachers I am speaking of, They are deceitful, unstable, and utterly destitute of all that is good; Their high Pretences to Knowledge and Piety are like Wells that bid fair for the Relief of a thirsty Traveller; but, having no Water in them, disappoint his Hopes: And as Clouds often look promising for Rain to refresh the Earth, but are soon dispersed by tempestuous Winds, and produce noxious Vapours instead of

* Though *Balaam* had once and again said, that *he could not go beyond the Word of the Lord*, and was constrained to refuse *Balak*'s Offer; yet it appears from the whole History of him in *Numbers*, (See *Chaps.* xxii. xxiii.) that his covetous Heart was so set upon the offered Bribe, as to make him earnestly desirous, and exceeding restless in Attempts, to get a Dispensation of God's express Command that he should not go with *Balak*'s Messengers to curse *Israel*; and he certainly would have cursed them, had not God invincibly over-ruled his Mind and restrained him from it, contrary to his own Inclination: And when he could not carry his Point, he gave such wicked Counsel, as was the Means of drawing *Israel* into a provoking Trespass against the Lord, which brought a dreadful Plague upon them, as appears from *Numb.* xxxi. 16, and *Rev.* ii. 14.)

any good Effects; so these Deceivers pretend to make their Proselytes wise to Salvation, but are carried by the Violence of their Corruptions from one Error and Sin to another, with such a malignant Influence, that neither they nor their Followers ever come to the Knowledge of the Truth, and the Practice of Holiness; and the thickest Cloud of horrible Darkness, Misery and Despair is kept in Store, by the righteous Judgment of God, for these vile Miscreants to be their dreadful Portion for ever.

18 *For when they speak great swelling* Words *of Vanity, they allure through the Lusts of the Flesh, through much Wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in Error.*

18. For when they utter great and pompous Words with an Air of Sanctity, and of making some wonderful Discoveries, they are all a Noise about Nothing, empty Sounds that vent the Pride and Vanity of their own Hearts; and are thrown out as a Bait to entice and catch unwary Souls, by being accommodated to the sensual Inclinations of depraved Nature, and to the lascivious Temper of those, that had indeed been brought off from the Errors of Judaism, or of Heathenism, and in their outward Behaviour, * for a while at least, had fled from the Conversation and Practices of such, as lead wicked Lives according to their erroneous Principles.

19 *While they promise them Liberty, they themselves are the Servants of Corruption: For of whom a Man is overcome, of the same is he brought in Bondage.*

19. At the same Time that they flatter their Followers with Promises of all the Liberty they can wish for, to indulge their licentious Pleasures, without Fear or Danger, they are themselves the worst of Slaves to the Corruptions of their own Hearts, which will issue in their final Destruction: For whatever a Man is intirely overmatch'd and conquered by, as they are by their own Lusts, he is brought into an absolute and slavish Subjection to it, like a Captive in War that is fallen into the Hands of a victorious Enemy; and all Apostates will surely find that such a Sort of pretended Liberty is the vilest Slavery.

20 *For if after they have escaped the Pollutions of the World, through the*

20. For if after they have been so far externally reformed from the gross and scandalous Practices of the Men of this World which lies in Wickedness, (1 *John* v. 19.) as to have fled from those Defilements in Life, though not in Heart, †

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* Some good Copies instead of *clean* or *truly* (ὄντως) read *a little* or *a little while*; (ὀλίγον) others, *almost*; (ὀλίγως) and the *Ethiopic*, *a few*, (ὀλίγους) Vid. *Mill.* in loc. But which ever *Reading* we follow, it seems to relate only to *a Change of Notions*, and *an external Reformation* (See the Note on *ver.* 20.)

† *Escaped the Pollutions of the World thro' the Knowledge of Christ*, and *clean escaped from them who live in Error*, (ver. 18. See the Note there) are the strongest Expressions of Good that are used in the Description of these Apostates; and yet neither these, nor any other, import that they ever were really Partakers of *special* saving Grace: For Persons (like the *stony* and *thorny* Ground Hearers, *Matth.* xiii. 20—22, and like *Herod*, *Mark* vi. 20.) may be so impress'd by mere Notions of Christ and the Gospel, as to be restrained from gross Sins, and brought to a credible Profession of Obedience, for a while, to the divine Commands, and not be thoroughly turned in Heart to God, as it is apparent these Apostates were not, by their being represented still the same in their natural Disposition, as the Dog is, that returns to his own Vomit, and the Sow to her wallowing in the Mire, *ver.* 22. (See the Paraphrase there.)

Knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter End is worſe with them than the Beginning.

through the Convictions and Reſtraints, that they were brought under by the Notions they had received of Jeſus Chriſt, as a Sovereign and a Saviour, to deliver them from Sin and the Wrath to come; If, after all this, they are again enſnared and involved in thoſe Iniquities, and, like Perſons thoroughly conquered and governed by them, yield themſelves up as Servants to obey them; their Caſe is more aggravatedly guilty, dangerous and hopeleſs, than it was before they knew any Thing of Chriſt and the Goſpel; and eſpecially than it was, when they firſt had ſome Conceptions of them.

21 *For it had been better for them not to have known the Way of Righteouſneſs, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy Commandment delivered unto them.*

21. For their Sin and Puniſhment would really have been leſs, had they never heard, or received any Notion of Chriſt and the Way of Holineſs, and of Righteouſneſs, through him, to eternal Life, than, after they have been acquainted with it, to revolt and apoſtatize from the pure and holy Doctrine, which had been preached to them with divine Authority to bind it upon their Conſciences. (See *Matth.* xi. 20—24. and *John* ix. 41, and xv. 22.)

22 *But it is happened unto them according to the true Proverb, The Dog is turned to his own Vomit again; and, The Sow that was waſhed, to her wallowing in the Mire.*

22. But it has fallen out with them according to two antient Proverbs, one of which is recorded in the divinely true Word of God, (*Prov.* xxvi. 11.) and both are remarkably verified in theſe Apoſtates; They, under the Power of Conviction by the Light of the Goſpel, eaſed their burden'd Conſciences by caſting off ſome vicious Practices which they had been addicted to: But their Nature not being changed by renewing Grace, and their inmoſt Temper being ſtill the ſame as ever, when their Pangs wore off, they betook themſelves again to their former filthy Courſes with as much Eagerneſs as before; and ſo they are like a Dog that had caſt up what was offenſive to his Stomach, but, continuing a Dog ſtill, and acting ſuitable to his own Nature as ſuch, he licks up his own Vomit again: And, under all their external Reformations, they are like a Sow that was waſhed from the Filth ſhe had contracted by wallowing in Mud and Dirt; but, being a Sow ſtill, returns, according to her own ſwiniſh Temper, to rolling herſelf about in the Mire again.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How pernicious and deteſtable are heretical Teachers, whoſe corrupt Principles and Practices are ſubverſive of the Goſpel, even to conſtructively denying that God, who they own has wrought wonderful Deliverances in his Providence for them, as his profeſſing People! They put on ſpecious Appearances of Wiſdom and Piety to entice, enſnare, defile and ruin unſtable Souls: But with all their high ſwelling Words of Vanity, they are void of all Good, like Wells and Clouds without Water; and walk after the Fleſh. They carry on the vileſt Deſigns of Covetouſneſs, Pride, Luxury, and all Manner of Uncleanneſs, and are a Reproach to the Chriſtian-Name, and all religious Society. They preſumptuouſly deſpiſe the beſt of Things, which they know nothing of, but which ſtand in Oppoſition to their carnal Views; and under vain Boaſts and deceitful Promiſes to others of a Liberty, which is downright Licentiouſneſs, they are themſelves the worſt of Slaves, under every tyrannizing Luſt, to their

own

own Perdition, and the Perdition of those that apostatize from Christ and the Gospel, through their Influence. How shocking are these Thoughts! But we need not be stumbled at them, since we are forewarn'd that such Seducers would arise in the Church, and draw away many into their mischievous Errors and Sins. But, ah, how dreadful is the Condemnation of those who preach and propagate, and of those who are perverted by Heresies that tend to, and will issue in eternal Destruction! They have forsaken the only true Way to eternal Life; and the Truth of the Gospel is defamed by them, and by others on their Account. They are under the Curse of God, and liable, without Repentance, to severer Rebukes, than he gave to *Balaam* for his Iniquity, by miraculously opening the Mouth of the Ass he rode upon. Judgment is already passed upon them in the Purpose and Word of God; and their Damnation hastens a-pace, till it come with Fury upon them, as it did upon the fallen Angels, and the Sinners of the old World in the Days of *Noah*, that eminent Preacher of Righteousness, and upon the profligate Cities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*. They are held, as it were in adamantine Chains, to be punished at the great Day. But the Righteous, who are grieved at the Transgressions of the Wicked, shall be as effectually delivered, in God's Way and Time, from all Evil, as *Noah* was from the Deluge, and *Lot* from the Conflagration of those infamous Cities. Alas! How heavy will the Destruction of the Deceivers and Deceived be! They shall utterly perish for, and in their own Corruption, and receive the dismal Reward of all their Unrighteousness, in which they rioted and delighted, with open Impudence; and the most hideous Darkness of Horror and Despair is laid up in Store for their endless Misery. Ah! How aggravated was their Guilt; and how proportionable must be their Punishment, who have been externally reformed, through Convictions by Gospel-Light; but, taking up short of a Work of Heart-changing Grace, and remaining still the same as ever, in their corrupt Temper, return with Eagerness to the Vices, which they had formerly indulged, but which Pangs of Conscience forced them, for a while, to give up; and so are like the Dog that licks up the Vomit, which he discharged while it offended his Stomach; and like the Sow that was wash'd, and returns with Pleasure to wallowing in the Mire! O how much better would it have been for such People to have never known the Way of Righteousness, than in this Manner to abuse their Knowledge of it! Their Condition, after all, is inexpressibly more miserable and hopeless, than ever it was before; while the Lord knows how to deliver the Godly out of Temptation.

CHAP. III.

The Apostle declares the Design of this Epistle to be the same with that of the former, to remind them of Christ's final Coming to Judgment, 1, 2. *Observes that Scoffers at Christ's second Coming were to be expected under the Gospel-State,* 3, 4. *Confutes their vain and insulting Objections against it, and shews that he will certainly appear at unawares, when the present Frame of Nature will be dissolved by Fire,* 5—10. *And infers from thence, and from the new State of Things that will then be introduced, the Necessity of Holiness, Patience and Stedfastness in the Faith,* 11—18.

TEXT.

1 *THIS second Epistle, Beloved, I now write unto you; in* both *which I stir up your pure Minds by way of Remembrance:*

PARAPHRASE.

1. THE principal Design of this second Epistle, which I now write to you, my dear Brethren in the Lord, beloved of him and me for his Sake, is much the same with *that* of the former; in both which I would excite the Attention and Caution of sincere Souls among you, that are not yet corrupted in the Faith, but need to be arm'd against false Teachers, by reminding and solemnly warning such of you, again and again, (*Chap.* i. 13.) of their destructive Schemes

Schemes and Attempts to overthrow your Faith and Hope, Holineſs and Joy.

2 That ye may be mindful of the Words which were ſpoken before by the holy Prophets, and of the Commandment of us the Apoſtles of the Lord and Saviour:

2. I am earneſtly deſirous that ye may bear in Mind, and ſeriouſly reflect upon, the Predictions and Doctrines, which were delivered in former Times by *holy Men of God, who ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt*; (Chap. i. 21.) and were more lately confirmed by the Commandment, which we, the inſpired Apoſtles of our Lord Jeſus, the King and Saviour of the Church, have received from him, and delivered in Word and Writing to you, as about other Things, ſo particularly about his ſecond coming to Judgment, (*Chap.* i. 16.) that ye may be fortified againſt the pernicious Influence of ſecret and open Seducers, and not be ſtumbled at them.

3 Knowing this firſt, that there ſhall come in the laſt Days Scoffers, walking after their own Luſts,

3. Eſpecially ſince ye have been forewarned, and may well know, (*Jude ver.* xvii. 18.) that in this laſt Age of God's Diſpenſations toward the Church, there would ariſe among them profane Deſpiſers and Deriders of the moſt important Points of divine Revelation; Men, who in the Courſe of their Lives give themſelves up to, and follow their own carnal Devices and corrupt Inclinations, Paſſions and Appetites.

4 And ſaying, Where is the Promiſe of his coming? for ſince the Fathers fell aſleep, all Things continue as they were *from the Beginning of the Creation.*

4. And, under the Power of Infidelity, they are continually ſaying in a Way of Taunt, Jeer and Inſult, like thoſe antient Scorners, *Let him make ſpeed and haſten his Work, that we may ſee it.* (Iſa. v. 19.) What is become of the Promiſe of your Lord's appearing, as Judge of the World, (*ver.* 7.) to put an End to the preſent Frame of Nature; and to take Vengeance on his Enemies, and deliver his Followers out of all their Troubles, which ye Chriſtians ſo confidently talk of, and expect on the [illegible] of divine Predictions? Where is there any Sign of this? Don't ye plainly ſee that it is all Fancy and Deluſion, and that there is nothing in it? For ever ſince the Days of our Fathers, who, ye ſay, had the Promiſe of it, and foretold it, but who are long ago dead and gone, or, as ye call it, fallen aſleep to awake again at the general Reſurrection, all Things in the whole Courſe of Nature continue, without any remarkable Alteration, juſt the ſame as they were, even from the Beginning of the World to this very Day. Thus theſe Mockers vainly argue that, becauſe Chriſt is not yet come to Judgment, he never will: But all this Reaſoning and Ridicule is intirely groundleſs and mere trifling; it proceeds only from the Blindneſs and Perverſeneſs of their own corrupt Minds and Hearts.

5. For this they willingly are Ignorant of, that by the Word of God the Heavens were of old, and the Earth ſtanding out

5. For they wilfully ſhut their Eyes againſt the Scripture-Account of the great Things, that God has done in his own Time, which might ſatisfy them, that as all Things are poſſible to him; ſo no Argument can be drawn againſt his never doing what he has not yet ſeen fit to do: They will not ſeriouſly conſider, as they ought, that, after an immenſe

of the Water, and in the Water.

mense Duration from all Eternity had run out, he by a sovereign almighty Command, saying, *Let it be so, and it was so*, created, above four Thousand Years ago, the aerial Heavens, (See the Note on *ver.* 7) with all the Waters in the Firmament; and the Earth, consisting of Land and Sea, raising the dry Land above the Surface of the Sea, to which he set Bounds. (*Gen.* i. 6—10, and *Ps.* civ. 9.) and placing some part of the Earth under the Waters, and encompassing and moistening the rest with them, that the dry Land might not crumble to Pieces.

6 Whereby the World that then was, being overflowed with Water, perished.

6. By Means of which Waters, from the Heavens above and the great Deep below, the old World, after it had continued in the same State about sixteen Hundred and fifty six Years, was overflowed; and all Mankind, except Eight Persons, (See the Note on *Chap.* ii. 5.) were utterly destroyed by the universal Deluge; (*Gen.* vii. 11—23.) So that there is no room to pretend, that *all Things continue as they were from the Beginning of the Creation*; or that any Length of Forbearance can Prevent an Accomplishment of the Prophecies of Christ's coming to judge the World at the last Day; which will bring a more terrible Destruction upon the Wicked, than was suffered by *Noah*'s Flood, after it had been foretold an Hundred and twenty Years. (*Gen.* vi. 3.)

7 But the Heavens and the Earth which are now, by the same Word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the Day of Judgment, and Perdition of ungodly Men.

7. But the aerial Heavens * and this Earth, as subsisting in their present Form, are kept in their Courses as secure as a Treasure, (τεθησαυρισμένοι εἰσι) according to God's Promise, (*Gen.* viii. 22.) by the same powerful and effective Word of Command, which at first created, and afterward brought Destruction upon them: But they are so far from being designed to abide for ever, that they are only reserved for the appointed Season of their final Dissolution, which will be, not by Water, as before, (*Gen.* ix. 9.—11.) but by a universal Conflagration, that will set them all on Fire, and consume them at the general Judgment of the great Day; which will certainly be the most dreadful, that ever was known, to all impious Scoffers at it, and to all that fear not God, and despise the only Saviour, who are reserved for Destruction against that awful Day.

8 But, beloved, be not Ignorant of this one Thing, that one Day is with the Lord

8. But, though ungodly Men raise Objections against the Promise of Christ's coming to Judgment, as if it never would be fulfilled, because so long a Time is already past without any visible Appearance of it; (*ver.* 4.) and though,

* By *the Heavens*, as I take it, is meant here, and in *ver.* 5. the *aerial Heaven*, the *plural* being put, by an Analogy of Number, for the *singular*, as it frequently is in other Places. (See the Note on *Matth.* xxi. 7.) For the Heavens and the Earth are here spoken of in Opposition to those of the old World, which could mean no more, than the Earth and its former Atmosphere, the State of which underwent a great Alteration by the Flood. And as the Waters of the Heavens and the Earth were a Preparation of Materials for the universal Deluge; so are the fiery Comets in the Air, and subterraneous Fires in the Earth, for the universal Conflagration of the World, which will not be till the Day of Judgment. (See Dr. *Whitby*'s Note.)

because

as a thousand Years, and a thousand Years as one Day.

because Sentence against their evil Works is not speedily executed; their Hearts are fully set in them to do Evil; (Eccles. viii. 11.)— Yet, my dear Christian-Brethren, whom I consider as beloved of the Lord, I would not have you Strangers to, or unmindful of this one Thought, which is enough to confute their vain and ignorant Cavils, and to quiet your own Minds, namely, that with the eternal Jehovah, who is *from everlasting to everlasting God,* and beholds all Things, past, present and to come, in one comprehensive View, *a Day* and a *Thousand Years* are equally but as a Point of Time, compared with his own immense [illegible]uration without Beginning, Change or End, (*Psal.* xc. 2 4.) and that [illegible]n his Account, the longest Succession of Years is infin[illegible] less than a single Day is in our Ways of Reckonin[illegible] [illegible]r fulfilling his Purposes and Promises; the precise [illegible] of which he has fixed, but reserved as a Secret in his own Breast.

9 *The Lord is not slack concerning his Promise, as some Men count Slackness; but is Long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance.*

9. As to the great Promise in particular, which we are speaking of, The Lord is not dilatory in performing it, as some Libertines impiously suggest, to discredit the Thing itself; or, as some of his own People may be apt to think, through the Workings of too much Impatience and Unbelief, under their present Burdens of Sin and Sorrow: But it may be said in this Case, as in a Prophecy of the Messiah's Days, (*Habak.* ii. 3.) *The Vision is yet for an appointed Time; but at the End it shall speak and not lie: Though it tarry, Wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry* one Moment beyond its set-Time: And what some Scoffers may count such a Delay, as defeats all Expectation of the Event, is only an Exercise of the kind Long-suffering and Forbearance of God towards us, † who

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† As the Persons here meant by *all,* are such as the Apostle ranked himself with, and are apparently all along in this Chapter, distinguished from *Scoffers* and *ungodly Men* (*ver.* 3. 7.) God's *not willing that any should perish,* &c. seems to refer to those, who are often called *beloved* in the Context, and particularly in the preceding Verse, which may naturally include, at least, their being *beloved of God,* as it is expressed *Rom.* i. 7; and who had been spoken of as *having obtained like precious Faith* at the Beginning of this Epistle (Chap. i. 1.) and stiled *Elect according to the Foreknowledge of God the Father.* (1 Epist. i. 2.) And as it cannot reasonably be thought that the Long-suffering of God was designed for the Salvation of those *Scoffers* and *ungodly Men,* who are reserved for Destruction, together with the Heavens and the Earth, against the Day of Judgment: (*ver.* 7.) So his *Long-suffering to Us-ward* may best be understood as relating to *the Elect,* inclusive of those of them that were still to be called in their successive Generations, who as one Body, or one Sort of People, may be spoken of by the Apostle in the first Person plural, as the whole Church, inclusive of those that shall be alive at the second Coming of Christ, are in 1 *Thes.* iv. 15. 17. (See the Note there and the Paraphrase on *Matth.* xxiv. 22.) Accordingly, the Design of God in his Long-suffering toward *them* is, *that none* of them *should perish, but that all* of them *should come to Repentance* in their proper Season. Or if instead of *to us-ward* (εις ημας) we admit of the Reading of the *Alexandrian* and *Stevens*'s Copies, which have it, *for you,* or *for your Sakes* (δι' υμας) and are followed by the *Syriac, Ethiopic,* and several other Versions, (Vid. *Mill* in loc.) it amounts to much the same.—But if, after all, any will insist upon it, that what the Apostle here says is to be extended to *Mankind* in general, Its Meaning, on this Supposition, may be, as Messrs *Cradock* and *Pyle* have given it, that the Lord defers his Coming in his great Long-suffering and Patience toward Sinners, to afford all of them the utmost Opportu-

are the Objects of his special Love, that the whole Number of our Body, who belong to the *Election of Grace*, (Rom. xi. 5.) may be called in their several Generations; he having determined in his eternal Wisdom and Will, that none of these should perish with the Scoffers and Ungodly before mentioned; (*ver.* 3, 7.) but that all and every one of them should be turned from their Iniquities, and be brought, by his Grace, to that evangelical Repentance, which is to Life and Salvation. (*ver.* 15.)

10 *But the Day of the Lord will come as a Thief in the Night; in the which the Heavens shall pass away with a great Noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat, the Earth also and the Works that are therein shall be burnt up.*

10. But how long soever God may defer the Day of final Reckoning and Retribution, which may be emphatically stiled *the great Day* (Jud. *ver.* 6.) *the Day of the Lord Jesus*, and *the Day of Christ*, (1 Cor. i. 8, and v. 5, 2 Cor. i. 14, and Phil. i. 6, 10.) as he will then appear in all his Glory to judge the World, This solemn Day or Time will certainly come in its appointed Season, and *that* at unawares, as suddenly and unexpectedly to all, and with as much Terror to the Wicked, as a Thief's breaking into a Man's House in the dead of the Night, while he is fast asleep, and has no Thought about it. An awful Day this will be, to the Consternation and Ruin of those that are not prepared for it, in which the present State of the aerial Heavens will come to a Period, (See the Note on *ver.* 7.) by an universal Convulsion of all Nature with a rapid Motion, and horrid Roar, like a violent Storm or Tempest, and all the component Principles of elementary Substances shall melt, like Wax, through excessive Heat, in the general Conflagration; and this Earth with all its rich and stately Furniture of Nature and Art, which carnal Men place their Happiness in, shall be burnt to Ashes.

11 Seeing *then* that *all these Things shall be dissolved, what manner of* Persons *ought ye to be in* all *holy* Conversation *and Godliness,*

11. Since therefore it is certain that the present Frame of this World, and all its sensitive Enjoyments, shall be thus amazingly and intirely reduced to a Dissolution; How should your *Affections*, who profess to *be risen with Christ, be set on Things above, and not on Things of the Earth?* (Col. iii. 1, 2.) And with what Watchfulness, Care and Circumspection ought ye to behave in all Manner of Purity and Holiness of Heart and Life toward God and Man, and in the Exercise of every Grace, and Discharge of every religious Duty, with Stedfastness, Perseverance, and encreasing Fervor, during your short and uncertain Abode in the Body?

12 *Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the Day of God, wherein the Heavens*

12. How important and becoming is this for Persons of your Character, who are expecting, looking, longing, and tending in your earnest Prayers, Desires, Hopes and Preparations for the Time, when that final decisive Day

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nities of seeing their Errors, and reforming their Practices; it being his gracious Design to do all, that his Justice and Goodness will permit, for their Salvation; or he not being willing, so far as may consist with his infinite Wisdom, Justice and Goodness, that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance.

being on Fire shall be dissolved, and the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat?

of the Lord Jesus shall come according to divine Appointment, in which, as has been observed (*ver.* 10.) the aerial Heavens being all in a Flame shall be destroyed, and all the constituent Principles of the Atmosphere, together with the Earth and all Things in it, shall be melted down by an intense dissolving Heat, into a confused Chaos, like that, out of which they were originally formed? (*Gen.* i. 2.)

13 *Nevertheless we, according to his Promise, look for new Heavens and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness.*

13. Nevertheless, as the Particles of Matter, that compose those Bodies, will not be annihilated, though wonderfully altered from what they are in their present Contexture; we, who believe in Jesus, are supported under present Calamities, and awful Prospects of this tremendous *Catastrophe*, with joyful Hopes of its turning to our unspeakable Happiness and Glory; while, according to the true and faithful Promise of our God, (*Isa.* lxv. 17, and lxvi. 22.) * we expect and long for a glorious and refining Change of the present State of Things, which for its Excellency, as the Product of the like almighty Power and Goodness that created this World, may well be stiled *new Heavens* and *a new Earth*, in which will be nothing that defiles, but all spotless Purity; and in which none but righteous and holy Persons shall dwell for ever. (*Rev.* xxi. 27.)

14 *Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such Things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in Peace, without Spot, and blameless:*

14. Therefore, my beloved Brethren, since, on the Foot of divine Revelation, ye earnestly desire, and justly hope for such a glorious and blessed Alteration of the whole Frame of Nature, when Christ shall come to judge the World at the last Day, Let it be your utmost Care and Endeavour, through Grace, to behave as becomes the Expectants of such wonderful Events, that ye may meet the Lord Jesus, whenever they come to pass, without Terror, and may be found by him as your Judge, and in him with Acceptance, Comfort and holy Boldness, as washed in his Blood, and sanctified by his Spirit; and so may be, not like those that are *Spots and Blemishes* to Christian-Societies; (*Chap.* ii. 13.) but may appear before him *holy and without Blemish*, free from all Defilement, as well as Condemnation. (*Eph.* v. 27.)

15 *And account* that *the Long-suffering of our Lord* is *Sal-*

15. And to encourage you hereunto, set it down as a sure Principle in your own Minds, that the great Patience and Long-Forbearance of our Lord towards a sinful World,

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* *New Heavens and a new Earth*, in the Stile of the Prophet *Isaiah*, are strong Figures to represent the glorious Change, that should be made in the Affairs of the Church under the Gospel-Dispensation, with an ultimate Reference to the much more glorious State of Things that we look for, as to be introduced at the last Day: And, possibly, *new Heavens and a new Earth*, of a more refined and excellent Nature than the present, may in a *literal* Sense be created, out of the dissolved Materials, to be the Habitation of the Saints for ever. But, whatever the Meaning be, they are to *succeed* the Dissolution of the present Frame of the Heavens and the Earth by Fire, and the Day of Judgment (*ver.* 10—13); and therefore seem to have no Relation to the thousand Years of Christ's glorious Reign on Earth, which is to *precede* these great Events. (See the Note on *Rev.* xxi. 1.)

vation; even as our beloved Brother Paul also, according to the Wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;

which his Enemies, to countenance their Unbelief of his ever coming, call *Slackness*, is really designed for, tends to, and shall issue in, not only your own complete Salvation, but likewise in the Salvation of the whole Number of God's Elect: (See the Note on *ver.* 9.) And the Point, I have been principally insisting upon, is quite agreeable to what our dearly beloved Brother in the Lord, and my Fellow-Apostle, *Paul*, has also delivered in his Epistle to professing Christians of your own Nation, * (*Heb.* ix. 27, 28, and x. 36, 37.) which he wrote under divine Inspiration, according to the eminent Knowledge that God gave him, in which he *was not a Whit behind the very chiefest Apostles.* (2 Cor. xi. 5.)

16 *As also in all his Epistles, speaking in them of these Things: In which are some Things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as* they do *also the other Scriptures, unto their own Destruction.*

16. He has also, more or less, intimated Things of this Nature in the generality of his other Epistles, in which he warns *Jews*, as well as *Gentiles*, against false Teachers and Seducers; and speaks of God's Long-suffering; of Christ's second Coming and its momentous Consequences; and of Believers patiently waiting for it, and the like: Among which Things (ἐν οἷς) there are, as he himself says to those *Jews* that were *dull of Hearing*, (Heb. v. 11.) some Doctrines, which though certain Truths, and as plain in themselves as their sublime and spiritual Nature well admit of, are not easily apprehended and received by weak and prejudiced Minds; and which, through the Darkness, Pride and Corruptions of Men's own Hearts, they that are not taught of God by his Spirit, † but are unskilful in the Word of Righteousness, or are sceptical and unsettled in their Principles, wrack and torture to a wrong Meaning, and pervert the Sense and Use of them, as they likewise do many other Passages of Holy Writ, both of the Old and New Testa-

* *Hath written to you* is generally understood as referring to the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, by most Commentators, who take the Apostle *Peter*'s Epistles to have been wrote to the converted *Jews*; But some, who take it to have been wrote to the converted *Gentiles*, suppose the Reference is to those Epistles to *Gentile*-Churches in *Asia Minor*, to which the Apostle *Paul* wrote.—But our Apostle seems to refer to some one of *Paul*'s Epistles in particular, with a Distinction of it from *all his other* Epistles; and I cannot but think that several Passages in our Apostle's two Epistles immediately point to *Jewish* Christians; (See the Preface to this first Epistle.) and that the Reference is more probably to the general Epistle to the *Hebrews*, than to any Epistle that was directed to only one particular Church.

† *They that are unlearned* don't here mean *illiterate* Persons, according to our common Use of that Word: But it is to be understood of those that are Strangers to all true Principles of Religion, or fluctuating in their Notions about it, through the Corruptions of their own Hearts; and so some Things in the Apostle *Paul*'s Writings were hard for them to understand, because they could not relish them, as well as that there were others of too spiritual and sublime a Nature for their injudicious and carnal Minds to take in, or indeed for any finite Mind fully to comprehend. But this is no Argument, either against *the Perspicuity* of Scripture, especially in Things that are necessary to Salvation; or against *the common People's reading them:* For, though the Apostle says that *some Things* in *Paul*'s Epistiles, he don't say that *the Epistles themselves*, or that *many*, much less *all* of them *are hard to be understood*; but gives an honourable Testimony to him and his Epistles, as his *beloved Brother*, who had wrote them, *according to the Wisdom that God had given him:* And it is supposed that these *unlearned Persons* did *read them*, or at least *heard them read*, which he don't blame them for, but only for their making a bad Use of them, as many do of the best and most necessary Things in the World, by perverting them to their own Destruction.

ment, to their own everlasting Perdition with high Aggravations of their Guilt, instead of receiving them with Meekness and improving them, as Means of *making them wise to Salvation, through Faith in Christ Jesus.* (2 Tim. iii. 15.)

17 *Ye therefore, Beloved, seeing ye know* these Things *before, beware lest ye also being led away with the Error of the Wicked, fall from your own Stedfastness.*

17. Since therefore ye, my dear Brethren, are forewarn'd of all these Things, and so fore-arm'd against crafty Seducers; and since ye know beforehand, that Christ will certainly come to Judgment, and take Vengeance upon all the Ungodly; Have a Care lest any of you being drawn aside, (συναπαχθέντες) with other Apostates, from him, and from the Way of Truth and Holiness, by the false Notions, deceitful Insinuations and vile Practices (ἀθέσμων) of impious, immoral and lawless Men, ye fall from your own Stability in the Doctrines, Purity and Profession of the Gospel, in which ye have hitherto persisted.

18 *But grow in Grace, and* in *the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him* be *Glory, both now and for ever. Amen.*

18. But to help you against all Declensions and Revolts, Let it be your earnest Prayer, and Endeavour in the Use of all proper Means, to be progressive in daily Exercises and Increases of every Christian-Grace, as also in an abiding Sense of the free Love and Favour of God, according to the Gospel; and in a clear, fiducial, practical and experimental Acquaintance with the Person and Offices, Doctrines, Promises and Commandments of our divine Lord and all-sufficient Saviour, Jesus Christ, and with your own personal Interest in him: To whom be ascribed, as is most justly due, all Adoration, Worship and Honour henceforth and for ever. May we, together with all the Saints and Angels, sincerely add, in Testimony of our Approbation, Hope and Assurance of its being so, *Amen!*

RECOLLECTIONS.

What Need have we to be often reminded of the Doctrines and Commandments, that are delivered to us by our Lord Jesus and his inspired Prophets and Apostles; and to be cautioned against the Errors and evil Practices of wicked and designing Men, that we may not be unsettled in our religious Principles by them! And how important is it to Believers, for preventing this Evil, that they grow in Grace and in the Knowledge of Christ all their Days! The great Doctrines of divine Revelation are evidently confirmed by the Harmony of inspired Writings, both of the Old and New Testament; and yet, alas! How many are there who, through wilful Blindness and Prejudices, ridicule, and raise groundless Objections against the most interesting Points of Faith, like that of Christ's coming to Judgment! And how many that have not learnt the first Principles of the Oracles of God, but are of a sceptical Temper, and pervert the plain Meaning of various Scriptures to their own Destruction! But the Word of the Lord stands fast for ever; and the Promise of Christ's second Coming shall certainly be fulfilled in its appointed Season, to the Joy of the Saints, and the Confusion of Sinners. As this World was once destroy'd by a universal Deluge of Water; so the whole System of its present Frame shall hereafter be set on Fire, dissolved and burnt up by a universal Blaze of melting Heat, to which it is reserved against the Day of Judgment, and Perdition of ungodly Men, who shall be tormented for ever with unquenchable Flames. But O what a magnificent State of Bliss and Glory in the new Heavens and new Earth, all refined, pure and holy, shall the Habitation of the Righteous be, without any Mixture of Sin, or Sinners! How soon this finishing Day will come, the Lord only knows; but it certainly will come, and *that* as suddenly and unexpectedly as a Thief in the Night, with terrible Surprize to all that shall

be unprepared for it. Some indeed would suspect that, because it is hitherto deferred, it never will be at all. Vain and foolish Thought! A thousand Years are infinitely less in the Account of the eternal and unchangeable God, than one Day is in ours; and what may seem to be a *Delay* in the Opinion of some, is only his *Long-Forbearance and Patience* towards a sinful World, till all his Elect be gathered in, that none of them may perish, but all and every one of them may be brought to saving Repentance. Since therefore we, who believe in Jesus, know that there will be a total Dissolution of this World and of all Things in it; How circumspect, holy and religious, wean'd from the present Life and all its Concerns, ought we to be in our Temper and Behaviour! And since we desire and expect a perfect State of Happiness in that eminent Day of the Lord, and are forewarn'd of Deceivers, that would turn us aside from him and from our Way to Heaven; How solicitous should we be for constant Supplies of Grace to enable us so to walk with God, as to find Favour and Acceptance with him in the Beloved, till we be presented holy and unblameable in his Sight through Jesus Christ! To whom be Glory and Honour through all Ages, and for ever. *Amen.*

A PRAC-

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF THE First Epiſtle General of the Apoſtle JOHN.

In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The PREFACE to the Firſt Epiſtle of JOHN.

THO' *the Name* of the Writer of this, and the two following ſhort Epiſtles, be not prefixed to them; there is nevertheleſs no Room to doubt but that it was the Apoſtle *John*, whoſe Name is no more mentioned in his *Goſpel*, than in either of theſe Epiſtles. All Antiquity aſcribes *the firſt* of them to him; and it was not long before *the other Two* were generally eſteemed canonical, and received as ſuch; and the great Similitude, and even Sameneſs of Phraſeology and Spirit, that runs through them all and his Goſpel, carry their own Evidence of their being wrote by the ſame Hand: Accordingly they caſt a good Light one upon another; and many Paſſages of theſe Epiſtles may be cleared up by comparing them together, and with the Evangeliſt.

The *Place* from whence, and the *Time* when, they were written, cannot be fully determined; but they ſeem to have been ſent from *Epheſus*, or ſome Part of *Aſia* the leſs, where this Apoſtle chiefly laboured, and before the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, as may be conjectured from his ſpeaking of *the laſt Time* as *then come*, *Chap.* ii. 18, which probably relates to the laſt Period of the *Jewiſh* Church and State, and the Commencement of the Goſpel-Diſpenſation, which is the laſt, and ſhall remain to the End of the World; and from his mentioning many *Antichriſts* and *Falſe Teachers*, as already appearing, which our Lord foretold would ariſe before the Deſolation of the Temple. *Chap.* ii. 18, and iv. 1, compared with *Matth.* xxiv. 24.

The *Perſons*, to whom this Epiſtle was wrote, were not any *particular* Church, but *all Chriſtians in general* of that Age, perhaps, principally *Jews*, but incluſive of *Gentiles*, with a View to all ſucceeding Generations; on which Account it is called *a general Epiſtle*. And the immediate *Occaſion* of writing it appears to have been taken from the pernicious Efforts of Judaizing and Antichriſtian-Teachers, who had broached many groſs Errors in Doctrine and Practice, and were the Fore-runners of others, who the Apoſtle foreſaw, by the Spirit of Prophecy, would riſe in After-Ages to corrupt and trouble the Church under *papal* Tyranny, Superſtition and Idolatry: In Oppoſition to all which, our Apoſtle's chief Deſign

was to establish Believers in the Faith of Christ's being the Son of God, and the true Messiah; to lead them into affecting Views of the Love of the Father in sending him, and bestowing the most glorious Benefits upon them on his Account; and thereby engaging their Love to him and to one another, and sweetly constraining them to depart from all Iniquity, and yield a cheerful Obedience to all divine Commandments, answerable to their high Privileges, Hopes and Obligations.

He begins with giving them the strongest Evidence of the Truth of what he delivered to them concerning Christ, that they might share, and rejoice with himself and his Fellow-Apostles, in their happy Communion with the Father and the Son; and reminds them of their Imperfection through in-dwelling Sin, and at the same Time of the Necessity of departing from the Practice of it, *Chap.* i. He then comforts them under a Sense of the disallow'd Sin that still remained in them; but shews that, if they were real Christians, their Freedom from its Dominion must be demonstrated, by their unfeigned Obedience to God's Commands, by their Love to the Brethren, and sitting loose from this World; and by watching and guarding against Seducers, in Virtue of the Anointings of the Spirit which they were favoured with, *Chap.* ii. He thereupon breaks out into a rapturous Admiration of the Love of God in making them his Children; and infers from their Hope of perfect Holiness and Happiness with Christ, that they ought to abstain from all Iniquity, and live after a holy Rate and in a cordial Affection to all their Christian-Brethren, as those that are born of God, and have an irreconcileable Aversion to Sin, *Chap.* iii. From hence he proceeds to caution them against hearkening to every Pretender to the Spirit, and shews how to distinguish the Spirit of Truth and of Error; and adds various Arguments to excite their brotherly Love, *Chap.* iv. Sets before them the Efficacy of evangelical Love, as springing from Faith in Christ, whose divine and saving Character is attested by three unexceptionable Witnesses in Heaven, and three on Earth, together with that, which Believers have in themselves; assures them, that all their Prayers, according to the Will of God, shall be answered; that they who are born of God shall be preserved from the Evil One, and are happily distinguished from the World which lies in Wickedness; and concludes with an Exhortation to renounce all Idolatry, *Chap.* v.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

The Apostle prefaces his Epistle to Believers in general with evident Testimonies to Christ, for promoting their Happiness and Joy, 1—4. *Shews the Necessity of a Life of Holiness, in order to Communion with God; and relieves them under a Sense of in-dwelling Sin, which they ought humbly to acknowledge still remains with them; but from which there is an all-cleansing Virtue in the Blood of Jesus,* 5—10.

TEXT.

1 THAT *which was from the Beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our Eyes, which we have looked upon, and our Hands have handled of the Word of Life;*

PARAPHRASE.

1. THE Design of this Epistle is to set forth what I and other Apostles of our Lord are fully assured of upon undeniable Evidence, and cannot but testify (*Acts* iv. 20) concerning the Person and saving Office of Christ. This *divine Person,* who in his original Nature was, before all Worlds,* truly and properly God, the same in Essence with, though distinct in Personality from God the Father; whom, when he was made Flesh and dwelt amongst us, (*John* i. 1, 2, 14. See the Notes there) we often heard in his public Preaching and private Discourses; whom we also have seen with our own Eyes, as at numberless Times *before,* so again and again *after* his Death and Resurrection; whom we have attentively and delightfully considered on various Occasions, and whose *Glory we beheld, as the Glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth.* (John i. 14.) And even *after,* as well as *before* his Resurrection from the Dead, we had all desireable Opportunities of touching and feeling him with our own Hands; (*Luke* xxiv, 39, and *John* xx. 27) and so had all possible Demonstration of the Reality of his risen human Body, as consisting of Flesh and Bones, which he had assumed into personal Union with himself, who is stiled both *the Word* and *the Life,* (John i. 1, 4) as he is the living *personal* Word of God, who, together with the Father and Spirit, is the Fountain and Author of the Life of all Creatures, and particularly of all spiritual and eternal Life to his People.

2 *(For the Life was*[1] *manifested, and we have seen it, and*

2. (For he in whom is Life, and who is the Life-Giver, (*John* i. 4) was *God manifested in the Flesh;* (1 Tim. iii. 16) and we, his Apostles, have actually seen and conversed with

* Though *from the Beginning* (απ' αρχης) and *in the Beginning,* (εν αρχη) as we have it, *John* i. 1, are somewhat different Expressions; yet as Christ is here stiled in the next Verse *eternal Life,* it is natural to take in his *eternal Existence,* correspondent to this Apostle's Assertion of it, *John* i. 1: And *ye have known him that is from the Beginning* (απ' αρχης) *Chap.* ii. 13, 14, (See the Note there) whether applied to the Father or Son, evidently relates to his *eternal Existence;* and our Apostle speaks of *Names that were not written in the Book of Life from the Foundation of the World* (απο καταβολης κοσμου) Rev. xvii. 8, which, I think, means *from Eternity.* Accordingly we may take *that which was from the Beginning* to relate to *the eternal Deity of Christ,* rather than to *the Beginning of the Gospel-Dispensation;* though it may bear the last of these Senses in some other Parts of this Epistle.

him

bear Witness, and shew unto you that eternal Life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us)

him in his human Nature; and, as authorised by his immediate Commission, do bear our Testimony to him in all his Characters, and discover to you his divine Person and Offices, who had originally and eternally Life in himself, and was from all Eternity co-existent with God the Father, and was conspicuously made known to us *in the Fulness of Time*, in which *God sent* him *forth*, as *his own Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law, &c.* Gal. iv. 4, 5.)

3 *That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have Fellowship with us: And truly our Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*

3. *That*, I say, which we, in the Manner but now mentioned, have both seen and heard of him, and in which it was impossible for us to be mistaken, we now publish and make known to you, to the End that ye, who believe in him, may have a Partnership and Communion, as one spiritual and holy Body with us, in all the gracious Promises, Ordinances and Influences, Blessings and Privileges, that belong to the Gospel-State, and that we ourselves are admitted to: And this is a Communion of the most excellent, honourable and heavenly Nature, richly worth your coming into; it being in Reality a Communion with God the Father himself in all the Blessings of his Love, which are communicated to us through Jesus Christ, his eternal Son; and with this dear Son of the Father in all the Blessings of his Purchase, as, through him, we are *Children and Heirs of God, and Joint Heirs with Christ*, (Rom. viii. 16, 17) *and have Access through him by one Spirit to the Father*; (Eph. ii. 18) and so have Communion with the Holy Spirit too, in all his Graces and Comforts, (2 *Cor.* xiii. 14) which is the Earnest of the heavenly Inheritance; where we shall have the most intimate and blissful Communion with the sacred Three in all their Glory for ever.

4 *And these Things write we unto you, that your Joy may be full.*

4. And our Aim in writing these great Things to you is, that ye may have a Fulness of solid Satisfaction and Rejoicing in this delightful and holy Communion, which makes up the noblest Pleasure we are capable of, till it be perfected in Heaven.

5 *This then is the Message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is Light, and in him is no Darkness at all.*

5. Now, in order to your having the Joy of this excellent Communion, and being Partakers of all the Blessings of it, Ye ought to know what God is, and who they are that shall inherit his grand Promise (ἡ ἐπαγγελία) of eternal Life. (*Chap.* ii. 25.). And the Sum of that Doctrine concerning his Nature and Perfections, which we ourselves have heard from the Mouth of our Lord in his Ministration upon Earth, and which, as his Messengers, we publish to you, is this, That God is an absolutely perfect Spirit, (*Matth.* v. 48, and *John* iv. 24) infinite in Wisdom, Purity, Blessedness and Glory, and in all other adorable Excellencies, that can be comprehended in an Idea of the most illustrious, amiable and all-penetrating Light; and in him there is not the least Defect of any Kind, or Mixture of any Thing contrary, or unsuitable to his perfect Rectitude, who utterly abhors all Iniquity. (See *Habak.* i. 13, and *Ps.* v. 4, 5.)

6 *If we say that we have Fellowship with him, and walk in Darkness, we lie, and do not the Truth:*

6. It is therefore a plain Consequence from hence, that if any of us, who bear the Christian-Name, pretend to be admitted to comfortable Communion with God, and Hope of enjoying him, who is so unspottedly pure and holy; and if, at the same Time, we live in the Practice of any known Sin, which involves Ignorance and Error, and is the worst of all Darkness in us, (*Rom.* xiii. 12, and *Eph.* v. 8) but is open to his all-seeing Eye; (*Heb.* iv. 13) we are insincere in that Profession, and practically give the Lie to it, and in Works deny it; (*Tit.* i. 16) and we speak and act in direct Contradiction to the Nature and Will of God, who is Truth itself, and to the whole Tenor and Design of the Gospel-Revelation, or of his Word, which is Truth; (*John* xvii. 17) yea, directly contrary to the very Nature and Truth of Things, which render it impossible that Righteousness should have any Fellowship with Unrighteousness, or Light with Darkness. (2 *Cor.* vi. 14.)

7 *But if we walk in the Light, as he is in the Light, we have Fellowship one with another, and the Blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all Sin.*

7. But if, according to our Profession, we as Children of Light (1 *Thess.* v. 5) do indeed live and walk, under the Guidance and Influence of the Spirit, in Ways of Truth and Holiness, in the Light of Gospel-Revelation, and in Resemblance of him, who dwells in immortal Light, (1 *Tim.* vi. 16) and has said, *Be ye holy; for I am holy.* (1 Pet. i. 16) We then have the best of all Communion, he with us, and we with him, in which all true Believers share as Fellow-Christians: And one great Blessing, and even the Foundation, of this Communion is, that the precious atoning Blood of Jesus Christ, who is both the anointed Saviour and the eternal eminently beloved Son of the Father, is continually efficacious for cleansing us from the Guilt, Condemnation and Power of all our Sins; and, at length, from all remaining Defilement and In-being of Sin, which, for his Sake, shall be intirely purged away, and have no more Place in us, or bad Effects upon us; but we shall be as like as possible to him, when *we shall see him as he is.* (Chap. iii. 2.)

8 *If we say that we have no Sin, we deceive ourselves, and the Truth is not in us.*

8. However, as Sin came into the World with us, and can't be utterly extirpated till we die out of it, If any of us, who pretend to be cleansed by the Blood of Christ, are so ignorant, proud and vain, as to imagine that, in this present State of Weakness and Mortality by reason of Sin, we are so throughlycleansed from it, as to have no Remainders of its Workings in us, we certainly deceive our own Souls; and neither the Truth of God's Word, which abundantly declares the contrary, nor any true Light of Knowledge, Grace or Holiness is found in us.

9 *If we confess our Sins, he is faithful, and just to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness.*

9. If, on the other Hand, we, under a humbling Sense of our Imperfections and many disallow'd Failures, acknowledge our Transgressions to the Lord, and confess them with Faith in Christ's propitiatory Sacrifice for the Forgiveness of them, and with penitential Shame and Contrition, Ab-

horrence of them, and full Purpose of Heart, by his Grace, to forsake them, *(Prov.* xxviii. 13.) as all the Iniquities of *Israel* were confessed over the Head of the Scape-Goat, and *they afflicted their Souls* in Reflection upon them, *(Lev.* xvi. 21, 29, 30.) He is so true and faithful to his Promise to the Redeemer, and to those that believe in him; (*Isa.* liii. 11, and *Heb.* viii. 12.) and is so just to the Merit of his Blood, (*Rom.* iii. 26.) as for his Sake freely to pardon all our Sins of Omission and Commission, in Thought, Word and Deed, and purge our Consciences from Guilt; and to cleanse us from the reigning Power and Defilement of all our Iniquities by the Sanctification of the Spirit, which was purchased by the Blood of his Son to purify our Hearts and Lives, that we may be fit for Communion with him in this World, till we be *presented faultless before the Presence of his Glory with exceeding Joy* in the World to come. (*Jud.* ver. 24.)

10 *If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a Liar, and his Word is not in us.*

10. If, after all, we assert that we have not transgress'd the Law of God, so as to need Pardon through the Blood, and Sanctification by the Spirit of Christ, we, in Effect, make God himself a Liar, as we therein deny the Truth of what he has said in his Word, which pronounces upon the whole Race of Mankind, that *all have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God*; (Rom. iii. 23.) and we thereby shew that the Truth of the Gospel has no Place in us, the very Nature of which supposes us to be Sinners, and is designed to bring us to a humble, penitent Confession of Sin; (*ver.* 9.) and to Faith in the Redeemer's Blood for the Remission of it, (*ver.* 7) and for Victory over it, till we shall be completely delivered from the Whole of Sin in that heavenly *Jerusalem, into which nothing shall enter that defiles, or works Abomination, or makes a Lie.* (Rev. xxi. 27.)

Recollections.

What incontestible Evidence have we from faithful Eye and Ear-Witnesses of the Truth of the Gospel-Revelation, concerning Christ and the Benefits brought in by him! And what a blessed Communion are true Believers hereby led into with God the Father, and his only begotten Son, who as a divine Person was ever living with him, and as the incarnate Saviour is the Author of eternal Life to them! And O the Fulness of Joy that abounds in them, who are Partakers of these Blessings! But as God is infinitely pure and holy, and possessed of all exalted and amiable Perfections, that can go into the Notion of the most illustrious Light, and is absolutely abhorrent of all Iniquity, and free from every Kind of Defect; it is vain Self-Delusion, and directly contrary to him, to his Word, to the Nature of Things, and to the Truth of the Gospel, for any who live in a Course of Sin, which is the worst of all Darkness, to imagine, or pretend, that they have Communion with him. And, on the other Hand, it is as vain and self-deceiving; and as directly giving the Lie to God himself, in the Declarations of his Word, for any to think or say, that they are intirely free from all Remainder of Sin in this frail and mortal State. But if, with humble Acknowledgments of indwelling Sin and of our Need of a Saviour, and with Faith in him, we conscientiously confess and depart from all Iniquity, and walk, under the Guidance and Influence of the Spirit, in the Light of Truth and Holiness, conformable to the Nature, Will and Commandments of God, who is Light; we really have Communion with him, a fundamental Part of which is, that the infinitely

precious Blood of Christ, his beloved Son, is effectually applied to us for the Remission of all our Sins, and for subduing their Power in us: And God is so faithful to his Promise, and just to the Merit of his Son, as to pass by our Transgressions for his Sake, and gradually sanctify and cleanse us from all Iniquity; 'till, at length, in a better World, we shall *be holy, and without Blemish; not having Spot, or Wrinkle, or any such Thing.*

CHAP. II.

The Apostle directs Believers to the Advocacy and Atonement of Christ for Help and Relief against sinful Infirmities, 1, 2. *Describes the Effects of a saving Knowledge of, and Union with him, as productive of Obedience and Love to the Brethren,* 3—11. *Addresses Christians under the various Characters of little Children, young Men and Fathers,* 12—14. *Cautions them all against an inordinate Love of this World and Anti-Christian Errors,* 15—23. *And encourages them to stand fast in the Faith and Holiness of the Gospel, according to the Light and Influence of the spiritual Unction, which they had received,* 24—29.

TEXT.

1 MY *little Children, these Things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:*

PARAPHRASE.

1. THE Design of what I have thus far wrote (*Chap.* i.) is to caution you, whom I consider with all Affection, Endearment and Tenderness, as though ye were the young Offspring of my own Bowels, * to take heed of giving Way to any known Iniquity, or of falling into it thro' Surprize or Temptation, much more of living in the Practice of it: And it is with this further View, that, as we all have sinned, and Remainders of Corruption still attend us; (*Chap.* i. 8, 10.) so, to prevent your despairing of Mercy on that Account, ye may consider that, † when any of us, who believe, fall, through Infirmity and Temptation, into one or another Transgression, (*For there is not a just Man upon Earth that doth Good, and sinneth not,* Eccles. vii. 20.) we have a glorious and ever prevailing Intercessor to plead our Cause with his and our Father, *the Judge of all,* (Heb. xii. 23.) against the Charges of Law and Justice, and the Accusations of Satan, that our Iniquities may not

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* *My little Children* is an Appellation, by which our Apostle often addresses the *whole Body* of these Christians; and so it is *mostly* to be understood, not as a Term of Distinction of younger and weaker from older and stronger Believers, as in *ver.* 12, 13; (see the Note there) but as a Term of Tenderness and Endearment, as our blessed Lord himself used it to his Disciples, *John* xiii. 33. And, perhaps, many whom the Apostle wrote to were converted by his Ministry, which engaged his most affectionate Love to them; and as he was by this Time an old Man, it was the more decent, and befitting his Age, to speak to all Believers under this Title.

† The Particle (ἐὰν) rendered *if* frequently signifies *when,* and particularly in the Stile of our Apostle, as in *John* xii. 32. (See the Note there) and xiv. 3, and xvi. 7. And *Calvin* on this Place thinks, that it ought to be resolved into a *causal* Particle, because it cannot be but that we should sin; and so the Apostle confirms what he had been saying, *Chap.* i. 8, about Sin's remaining in true Believers themselves, who are far from being perfect in Holiness.

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be charged and punished upon us according to their Deserts, nor be suffered to prevail and reign in us, as they do in others: And this Advocate is no less than Jesus Christ, *the Lord our Righteousness*, (Jer. xxiii. 6.) who is perfectly holy and righteous in himself, and has wrought out an everlasting Righteousness for us, which he presents before the Throne in his Intercession on our Behalf.

2 *And he is the Propitiation for our Sins: And not for ours only, but also for* the Sins of *the whole World.*

2. And we may safely depend upon, and take the Comfort of his Interest with God the Father for us, as all his Advocacy is founded on the effectual Atonement he has made, to the full Satisfaction of Divine Justice, that we may be forgiven all Trespasses, and none of them may have Dominion over us: And his Atonement is not only for our Sins, who are of *Jewish* Extract, and have already believed; but also for the Sins, not indeed of the whole Race of Mankind, since he prays not for them all universally, (*Joh.* xvii. 9.) and Multitudes of them perish in and by their Iniquities; but for the Sins of all, for whom he is an Advocate, (*ver.* 1.) and who do, or shall hereafter believe in him, (*John* xvii. 20.) even *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, wheresoever they be scattered abroad through the whole World. (See the Notes on *John* i. 29, and iii. 16.)

3 *And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments.*

3. And it is evident to us, that we have a true and saving Knowledge * of Christ, which includes Faith in him and Love to him, if it has a powerful Influence to engage us unto a sincere, cheerful and unreserved Obedience to whatever he has commanded, both in the Precepts of the moral Law, and in the Institutions of the Gospel. (*John* xv. 14.)

4 *He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a Liar, and the Truth is not in him.*

4. Whoever he be that pretends to say, † I have known, loved and believed in him, and have had Communion with him, (*Chap.* i. 6.) and yet makes no Conscience of keeping his holy Commandments, that Man speaks what is utterly false, and inconsistent with his ever having had an effectual Knowledge of him: He gives the Lie to his own Profession, and to the Word of God; and there is neither Sincerity in his Assertions, nor the Truth of Grace, or of the Gospel in his Heart.

5 *But whoso keepeth his Word, in him verily is the Love of God perfected. Here-*

5. But whoever duly regards, holds fast and carefully observes the Doctrines, Ordinances and Duties contained in the Word of the Lord, he is undoubtedly under the eminently governing Influence of that sincere and supreme Love to

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* *Knowledge* is sometimes put for, or is at least inclusive of *Faith*, as in *Isa.* liii. 11, and *John* xvii. 3; and at others, of *Approbation*, or *Love*; (See the Note on *Matth.* vii. 23.) and our Context leads us to understand it here of such a fiducial, affectionate and practical Knowledge, as is necessary to *Fellowship* with Christ and a personal Interest in his *Propitiation.*—And that *Christ* is the Person here referred to, appears from his being the *immediate* Antecedent; accordingly I take him to be meant all along in the three following Verses, though he be not expresly mentioned again in either of them; and yet he is plainly pointed out in *ver.* 6.

† *I know him* is in the *Greek*, (ἔγνωκα) *I have known him*: And the Apostle's saying, that if he, who pretends to this, *keeps not his Commandments, he is a Liar, and the Truth is not in him*, intimates that he never had the true Knowledge of Christ, or the Truth of Faith, or of any other Grace in him, but was a hypocritical Professor; otherwise, it would certainly have had a better Effect upon him.

God

by know we that we are in him.

God, which, under a Sense of his Love, constrains him to keep his Commandments, and not count them grievous. (*Chap.* v. 3, and see the Note on *Chap.* iv. 12.) When it is thus with us, we are hereby well assured, that we are vitally united to Christ, and interested in all his Benefits.

6 *He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*

6. Keeping his Word is so closely connected with our Union and Communion with him, that every one who professes a special Interest in him, as one that dwells in him, (*John* vi. 56.) and would make it out to himself and others, is indispensibly obliged to live and act in the Course of his Conversation after Christ's own Example, and to *tread in his Steps*, by a holy and humble Imitation of him. (1 *Pet.* ii. 21.)

7 *Brethren, I write no new Commandment unto you, but an old Commandment which ye had from the Beginning: The old Commandment is the Word which ye have heard from the Beginning.*

7. In my so earnestly pressing you, dear Christian-Brethren, to an Imitation of Christ, and *that* with Regard to the great Duty of *Love*, which I am in a special Manner going to recommend to you, (*ver.* 8—11.) I don't write about any Commandment that is intirely new; but remind you of a divine Precept, which, for the Substance of it, was delivered, as of perpetual Obligation, long ago, even as long as the Beginning of the Old Testament-Revelation; and which ye were taught, with additional Light and Enforcements, at the first Publication of the Gospel among you. (See the Note on *John* xiii. 34.) This antient Commandment, which is contained in the Law given by *Moses*, (Lev. xix. 17, 18.) and enforced by our blessed Lord in the Beginning of his Ministry, is what ye heard in the Word, that was preached to you at your very first believing, and entering upon the Profession of his Name.

8. *Again, a new Commandment I write unto you, which Thing is true in him and in you: Because the Darkness is past, and the true Light now shineth.*

8. But to give you a larger and still more striking View of it, I now again write to explain the excellent Duty of *brotherly Love*; and to inculcate it upon you under new Obligations, Motives, Encouragements, Assistances and Endearments, to enforce it, and to raise it to a higher Degree of spiritual, extensive and cordial Affection, according to Christ's new Injunction of it, (*Matth.* v. 43, 44.) than ever was known or practised before; and with Regard thereunto it may be called a new Commandment, which is eminently copied out with the greatest Truth and Evidence in Christ, who in his transcendent Love has set you the brightest Example of it, and which is imitated to a good Degree in you, who *are taught of God to love one another*; (1 Thess. iv. 9.) because the Darkness of the Old Testament-Dispensation, and of your former State of Ignorance, Error and Sin passes away, (παράγεται) and in great Measure is over and gone; and the clear Light of the Truth of the Gospel in the Revelation it makes of Christ, who is by Way of Eminence *the true Light*, (John i. 9.) is now display'd in its full Glory, and shines in your Hearts. (2 *Cor.* iv. 6.)

9 *He that saith he is in the Light, and*

9. He therefore who professes to believe the Gospel, and to be enlightned in the Knowledge of Christ, and purified by

hateth his Brother, is in Darkness even until now.

by that Means, and at the same Time is under the Power of an uncharitable, malicious and revengeful Temper towards his Christian Brother, is a Stranger to evangelical Light and Grace, and remains in a State of Sin and Error, which is the worst of all Darkness, to this very Day.

10 *He that loveth his Brother, abideth in the Light, and there is none Occasion of Stumbling in him.*

10. On the contrary, The Believer who has a cordial affectionate Love to his Brother for Christ's Sake, in Imitation of him, under the Constraints of his Love, and in Obedience to his Commands, really is, and shews that he continues to be, enlightned and renew'd by the Grace of the Gospel according to his Profession of it; and there is no Room for taking Offence at him, who lays no Stumbling-Block before his Brethren, nor is apt to take Offence at them; nor will any Difficulties he may meet with, in the Way of his Duty, be a Stumbling-Block to himself, to hinder his cheerfully persisting in it: For *great Peace have they that love God's Law, and nothing shall offend them.* (Psal. cxix. 165.)

11 *But he that hateth his Brother is in Darkness, and walketh in Darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that Darkness hath blinded his Eyes.*

11. But, as I said before, (*ver.* 9) and now repeat it, the more deeply to impress it upon your Consciences, Every Professor of Christ's Name that harbours a severe unfriendly Disposition, and indulges Prejudices in his Heart against his Brother, is still in an unregenerate State, destitute of saving Knowledge and under the Power of Sin; and, be his Pretences what they will, he hereby shews that he goes on in such Errors and evil Courses, as are spiritual Darkness itself; and doth not understand the Way that leads to eternal Life, or the Way in which he should walk to the Glory of God, and his own and other's Good; nor doth he discern and consider the sad Tendency and dismal Consequence of his pernicious Sentiments and Practices, because of the natural Blindness of his Heart; (*Eph.* iv. 18, and 2 *Cor.* iv. 3, 4.)

12 *I write unto you, little Children, because your Sins are forgiven you for his Name's Sake.*

12. The Admonitions, Cautions and Encouragements which I have given, especially about the great Duty of Love, and shall still further give you, are such as equally concern you all, whatever be the different Degrees of your Gifts and Graces, or of your Rank and Standing in Christianity. As to those of you that are young Converts, or for Weakness of Faith and Understanding, and all other religious Attainments are but as *Babes in Christ*, (1 *Cor.* iii. 1) †, and are apt

† *Beza*, *Piscator*, and many Expositors following them, apprehend that the Apostle don't begin his Distribution of Christians into the several Classes of *Fathers*, *young Men*, *and little Children*, till he comes to the next Verse, because the *Greek* Word, (τεκνα) here render'd *little Children*, is different from that in the Original, (παιδια) which is so render'd in the 13th Verse. But this Criticism, I doubt, is scarce sufficient to support its Design, since the last of these Words (παιδια) is evidently used, *ver.* 18, and *John* xxi. 5, in the same Sense as the first (τεκνα) is in several other Parts of this Epistle. I therefore rather incline to think that they are here and in the 13th Verse to be taken, as carrying much the same Meaning, to describe the lower Rank of Christians; and that the Apostle begins his Distinction of the several Ages of Believers in this Verse, and repeats it just in the same Order in the two following Verses, which appears more natural, than to suppose that he drops *little Children*,

apt to be mightily concerned about Pardon of Sin, as little Children commonly are about Forgiveneſs from their offended Parents; I write to you, becauſe, though your Faith be ever ſo weak, yet, being ſincere, all your Treſpaſſes, as well as thoſe of ſtronger Believers, are freely forgiven of God, (*Col.* ii. 13) for the Praiſe of the Glory of his Grace, and for the Sake of Jeſus Chriſt; through the Merit of his atoning Blood, in whoſe Name this great Benefit has been preached, and is convey'd to you. (*Luke* xxiv. 47, and *Acts* xiii. 38.) Ye therefore ſhould *love much, becauſe much is forgiven you.* (Luke vii. 47.)

13 *I write unto you, Fathers, becauſe ye have known him* that is *from the Beginning. I write unto you, young Men, becauſe ye have overcome the wicked One. I write unto you, little Children, becauſe ye have known the Father.*

13, 14. As to thoſe of you, that are of long Standing in Chriſtianity, and have attained a large Stock of Knowledge and Experience, like old Men and Fathers, who delight to hear and ſpeak of, ſearch into, and reflect upon antient Things; I write to you, Fathers in Chriſt, becauſe ye have been a great while acquainted with, and your Thoughts are much employ'd about *the Antient of Days,* (Dan. vii. 9)* even God the Father and his co-eternal Son, (1 *John* i. 1) together with their eternal Counſels and Deſigns according to the Goſpel-Revelation of them. Ye therefore, whoſe Hearts are ſo much taken up with the eternal Love of the Father and Son, ought to abound in the Exerciſe of this Grace. As to thoſe of you, who, for Zeal, Activity and ſpiritual Attainments, are like young Men that are come to the Strength and Vigour of their Age, and fit for military Exploits; (See *Mark* xiv. 51) I write theſe Things to you, becauſe, being *ſtrong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might,* (Eph. vi. 10) ye have encounter'd, wreſtled againſt, and obtained glorious Victories over your great *Adverſary the Devil,* that vile, apoſtate, wicked Spirit, *who walks about, as a roaring Lion, ſeeking whom he may devour.* (1 Pet. v. 8.) And as ye *are Conquerors* only *through him that loved you,* (Rom. viii. 37) ye ought to love him, and your Brethren for his Sake.—To impreſs theſe Things the more deeply upon you ſeverally, *I now ſay again,* (ſee *Gal.* i. 9) I write them to thoſe of you who are but newly born of God, or are like Infants, who uſually, firſt of all, learn to know and

Children, and mentions only *Fathers* and *young Men* in the firſt Diſtribution of the ſeveral Ranks of Chriſtians, for which, as far as I ſee, no good Reaſon can be given. And were the Verſes (which are of modern Invention) better divided, ſo as to join *two Thirds* of the former Part of the 13th to the 12th Verſe, and *the laſt Clauſe* of the 13th to the 14th, or to begin the 14th Verſe with that Clauſe, the natural Order of the Apoſtle's Way of ranging theſe different Degrees of Chriſtians would have appeared with more Propriety and Exactneſs.—And in what he writes to them ſeverally, there ſeems to be a beautiful Alluſion to ſuch Sort of Things as are moſt generally ſuited to the Taſte of Mankind in theſe different Stages of Life, as ſuggeſted in the Paraphraſe, according to Dr. *Goodwin*'s Obſervation, (Vol. iv. pag. 177, &c. 2d Part) though he makes *little Children* in this Verſe to relate to *Chriſtians in common.*

* Whether by *him that is from the Beginning* we underſtand *the Father,* or *the Son,* which I have put both Ways, leaving the Reader to his Choice, the Apoſtle ſpeaks of *the Exiſtence* of the Perſon here intended as *from the Beginning,* (ἀπ' ἀρχῆς) which, in either Caſe, was *eternally* before the Beginning of the Goſpel. (See the Note on *Chap.* i. 1)

love

love their Parents; because ye have been brought to a fiducial, affectionate Knowledge of God, as your heavenly Father in and through his beloved Son. I have also wrote these Things to those of you, who, like Fathers, are far advanced in Knowledge and Grace, by means of your long Study, Observation and Experience, and who take Pleasure in meditating upon the deep Things of God; because ye have, with great Judgment, Faith and Love, understood much of him, and of his Purposes and Contrivances for your Salvation, which, like himself, are from Everlasting. (Eph. i. 4.) And I have wrote these Things to those of you who, like young Men, are grown up to Maturity in spiritual Growth and Liveliness for Action; because being *strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus*, (2 Tim. ii. 1) and *strengthned with Might by his Spirit in the inner Man*, (Eph. iii. 16) ye are enabled to perform the most difficult Duties, and the Word of God, according to the Gospel-Revelation, has deep Root, and continues to work effectually in you; (1 *Thess.* ii. 13) and by weilding this *Sword of the Spirit*, (Eph. vi. 17) with the Hand of Faith, ye have defeated and gained signal Conquests over the great Enemy of your Souls, and all his wicked Instruments that would have perverted you.

14 *I have written unto you, Fathers, because ye have known him* that is *from the Beginning. I have written unto you, young Men, because ye are strong, and the Word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked One.*

15 *Love not the World, neither the Things* that are *in the World. If any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him.*

15. But, whether your Standing and Progress in Religion be more, or less, I would caution all and every one of you to take heed that, in Consistence with a subordinate Love which is due to some Persons and Things, your Affections be so weaned from, and mortified to this present evil World, as never to think that here is your Rest; nor to be entangled with, engrossed by, or inordinately carried out after, any of its Allurements, of what Nature or Kind soever, as though your Portion for Happiness lay in them. If there be any among you, whose Heart is supremely set upon this World, he neither has any true Love to God, the Father of Christ and of all true Believers in him, who will admit of no Competitor or Rival, (*Matth.* vi. 24) and reckons *that* to be no true Love to him at all, which is not *supreme*; † nor has such an one any Claim to, or right Sense of the Love of God to him in his own Soul.

16 *For all that* is *in the World, the Lust of the Flesh, and the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life, is not of the Father, but is of the World.*

16. For how enticing soever the Things of this World be to the irregular Desires of Mens Hearts; whether its *Pleasures*, that are suited to gratify lewd, intemperate and luxurious Inclinations; or its *Riches*, Estates and Possessions, that are looked upon with a greedy Wish and covetous Eye, which cannot be satisfied by them; (*Eccles.* iv. 8) or its *Honours*, Dignities and Preferments, grand Houses, Furniture and Equipages, and the like, which feed the Lust of

† *The Love of the Father* may relate either to his Love to us, as in *Chap.* iii. 16, and iv. 9; or to our Love to him, as in *Chap.* iii. 17, and v. 3.

Ambition, and are very tempting to the natural Pride of Mens Hearts, and carry them into all the Vanity of a gay, pompous and splendid Way of living: So far forth as any of these are perverted, and prove ensnaring to the Affections; This is not according to the original Design of the Father of Mercies in giving them; nor is it the Product of his Love to his Children, or of theirs to him: No, nor can he be the Approver, or Author of it; but it all proceeds from the malignant Influence of the Things of this World upon Mens carnal Hearts, and their own corrupt Inclinations to them.

17 And the World passeth away, and the Lust thereof: But he that doeth the Will of God abideth for ever.

17. And still further to arm you against all Temptations, and take off all inordinate Affections from Things on Earth, (*Col.* iii. 2) ye ought to consider what an uncertain, unsatisfying, fading and perishing Thing this World is; that it is continually fleeting and changing Hands while we are in it; and that even its best Things are very precarious and transitory, and will soon come to an End: And so will all our present Inclinations and Desires towards it, and Gratifications by its Pleasures, Riches and Honours, as we in a little Time shall have nothing farther to do with it; (1 *Cor.* vi. 13, and vii. 29—31) and then all that set their Hearts upon it shall perish with it. But the true Lover of God, who is wrought into a Conformity to his holy Will, as made known in his Word; and who, from a Principle of Faith, as working by Love, persists in a governing Course of Obedience to it, is possessed of substantial, satisfying and abiding Realities; stands with everlasting Continuance in the Love of God, and in a State of Grace; and shall live for ever in full Possession of all durable and heavenly Happiness.

18 Little Children, it is the last Time: and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many Antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last Time.

18. My dearly beloved Children, (See the Note on *ver.* 1.) It is proper for me to remind you, that the *Jewish* Dispensation is just now expiring, and the last Dispensation of Grace, which is to continue to the End of Time, has now commenced: And as ye have been told in the Predictions of our Lord and his Apostles, (*Matth.* xxiv. 11, 24, 25, 2 *Thes.* ii. 3—10, and 1 *Tim.* iv. 1.) that Deceivers would arise and set themselves against him; even so, many of this malignant Spirit are already risen up in the World, as Fore-runners of the utter Destruction of the *Jewish* Temple and City, State and Polity, and of that greatest of all Antichrist's, who will assume the Authority of Christ, and set himself up in Opposition to him. (See the Note on 2 *Thes.* ii. 4.) By this remarkable Event, as it now begins to appear, we may be well assured that we are come to the very last Hour (ὥρα) of the *Jewish* State; and are entered upon the last Dispensation of Mercy that God will ever afford to this sinful World; and so may be the better confirmed in the Truth of those divine Predictions, and the better fortified against the Errors of these

these Seducers, who make a Profession of Christianity to cover their vile Designs, but are really Apostates from it.

19 They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have continued with us: but they went out, *that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us.*

19. They, for a while, made plausible Appearances of being sincere Converts, and were in Communion with the Churches of Christ; and afterward departed from the Faith, and went out from amongst us to broach their corrupt Notions; but they really never were in good Earnest of the same Mind and Heart with us: For if they had been true Believers, renewed by Grace, and of the same Spirit with ourselves, there is no Question to be made, but that they would still have persevered in the Doctrines of Christ and his Apostles, and continued in Communion with us. But they revolted from the Faith and Fellowship of the Gospel, and separated themselves that they might appear to the Church and the World in their true Colours, for a Warning to some, a Caution to others, and a Brand of Infamy upon themselves, as mere Hypocrites or false hearted Professors, which too often creep into the visible Church; and that, under all their flourishing Pretences, it might be known that none of their Fraternity were true Believers, vitally united to Christ together with us.

20 But ye have an Unction from the Holy One, and ye know all all Things.

20. But as to those of you that have not been carried away with their Errors, ye have a rich Unction of the Spirit in his Gifts and Graces, which belongs to you, as *Kings and Priests unto God*, (Rev. i. 6.) and is shed abundantly upon you through Jesus Christ, your exalted Saviour, who is by way of Eminence *the Holy One*, (Dan. ix. 24, Acts iii. 14, and Rev. iii. 7.) and who as Mediator and Head of the Church, was anointed with the Holy Ghost above Measure; (*Joh.* iii. 34, and *Acts* x. 38.) and, in Virtue of his Death and Ascension to Heaven, communicates Light and Grace, according to the Measure of his Gift, to all his living Members: (*Eph.* iv. 7). And ye through this spiritual Anointing, are led into an experimental and practical Knowledge of every Thing, that is necessary for your Preservation from the Deceit of these Seducers, and for your own eternal Salvation.

21 I have not written unto you, because ye know not the Truth, but because ye know it, and that no Lie is of the Truth.

21. The Reason therefore of my having wrote to you on this Head, is not from any Suspicion as though ye were unacquainted with the Truth of the Gospel, and particularly with its grand fundamental Doctrine, concerning Jesus Christ as the true Messiah, (*ver.* 22.) which your Unction supposes ye cannot be ignorant of; but the Reason of my writing is to remind you of, and still further confirm and establish you in the Truth; which I do with the greatest Pleasure and Confidence of Success, because ye already know, believe and prize it; and are well assured that nothing contrary to it can be true, and that no Fraud, Deceit, or Error, like what these Impostors go into, can proceed from it, or be consistent with it; but is as contrary to the pure Gospel, as any Lie can be to Truth itself.

22 *Who is a Liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son.*

22. Who, of all others, is to be deemed an Impostor, Cheat and false Teacher, but he who denies our Lord Jesus to be *come in the Flesh*, (See the Note on Chap. iv. 3.) as the true Messiah, whom the Prophets foretold, and he declared himself to be, with the Attestation of Miracles to confirm it, and whom God his Father publicly owned as such? (*Matth.* iii. 17.) That Man is to be looked upon, as one that directly opposes Christ, and deservedly bears the Name of *Antichrist*, who, notwithstanding all this strong and complicated Evidence, denies the Father, as *the Father*; and the Son, as *the Son*; and denies that God the Father has sent him into the World, as the promised Messiah, and his beloved Son.

23 *Whosoever denieth the Son, the same, hath not the Father*. [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son, hath the Father also.

23. Whoever he be that denies the divine Personality and mediatorial Office of the only begotten Son of God, (*Chap.* iv. 9, and *Joh.* i. 1, 14.) he denies, not only the Father's Testimony to him, as the Messiah, but also, by Consequence, denies the Father's divine Relation to him, as *the Son*; and so takes away the distinguishing *personal* Characters of both, and the peculiar Glory, which belongs to them respectively in the Œconomy of Salvation; and has not a true Knowledge of the Father, nor a saving Interest in him. * But, on the contrary, he who cordially owns, believes and confesses the Son to be a divine Person, and the only Saviour of lost Sinners, believes and owns that he is the eternal Son of the Father, and was sent by him; and so has a due Regard, and pays suitable Honour both to the Father and the Son, (*Joh.* v. 23.) and has a right Knowledge of the Father, and an Interest in his special Love and Favour through the Son.

24 *Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you; ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.*

24. See to it therefore that the true Doctrine of Christ, concerning his Father and himself, be still embraced by you, and fixed as an abiding Principle in your Hearts, even that Doctrine, which ye have been instructed in from the very first Publication of the Gospel to you. If ye continue to hold *that* fast, and retain it as the engrafted Word of God, which ye heard and received at your first Acquaintance with the Gospel, ye shall prove to be, not merely Christians by visible Profession; but shall also abide by Faith and Love in Union and Communion with the Son, and with the Father through him, to your complete Salvation.

25 *And this is the Promise that he hath promised us, even eternal* Life.

25. And the grand comprehensive Promise, to which all others tend, and in which they shall finally issue, and which Jesus Christ, and the Father through him, has made in the Gospel, and will certainly fulfil to us, who thus abide

* The last Part of this Verse, which stands in different Characters, is wanting in most *Greek*-Copies; but is supplied from some others of good Credit, and from several *Versions*; and is reasonably supposed to have been dropt, through Carelessness, where it is left out, rather than foistered into the Text by a wickedly designed Interpolation. Vid. *Bez. Est.* and *Mill.* in loc.

in the Father and Son, is no less than an everlasting Life of all Perfection and Glory, which shall be enjoyed in the immediate Presence of God and the Lamb, and in the most intimate beatific Union and Communion with them, all blissful and transporting!

26 *These* Things *have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you.*

26. I thought it proper to give you these Hints about, and to establish, comfort and fortify you against, Persons of an Antichristian-Spirit, that have already rose up among you, and are endeavouring by subtle and deceitful Artifices to corrupt your Principles and Practice, and to draw you away from the Simplicity that is in Christ. (2 *Cor.* xi. 3.)

27 *But the Anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any Man teach you: But, as the same Anointing teacheth you all Things, and is Truth, and is no Lie; and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.*

27. But I need not insist so largely upon these Things, as I otherwise might; because that *Unction,* (*ver.* 20.) consisting of the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit, which ye have been favoured with, remains as a constant Principle within you, to enlighten, guide and govern you; so that there is no Necessity of your being instructed in the first Principles of the Oracles of God, (*Heb.* vi. 1.) by any Man whomsoever; † much less of your being taught by any of these new Upstarts, that would carry you off from the pure Gospel of Christ: But as this holy Unction itself leads you into the Knowledge of all Things necessary to Salvation, and is infallibly true, according to the Word of God, which *is Truth,* (*John* xvii. 17.) and has no Deceit or Falshood in it; and as it has already been effectual to bring you to the Knowledge of the Truth as it is in Jesus; so by Means of its continual Influence upon you, ye shall still remain stedfast in Christ, and in the Doctrines of his Gospel.

28 *And now, little Children, abide in him; that when he shall appear, we may have Confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his Coming.*

28. And now, to conclude what I have to say upon this Head, my dear little Children, Take heed that ye still adhere to Christ, and abide by the pure Doctrine of the Gospel concerning him, and by your holy Profession of his Name, that when he shall appear in all his Glory, *the second Time, without Sin, unto Salvation,* (Heb. ix. 28.) we, who have ministered the Gospel to you, may have the Satisfaction of seeing the happy Fruit of our Labours among you, and may not be disappointed in our Hopes concerning you; and that ye yourselves may have Boldness, together with us, before him, and not be confounded in the Day of Judgment; but may be *our Glory and Crown of Rejoicing,* which will be to your own exceeding Joy,

† *Ye need not that any Man teach you* can't be said with a Design of excluding the Use of ministerial Instruction; for the Apostle was at this very Time giving it to them. (See the Note on *Heb.* viii. 11.) But it either relates to their having no Need to be taught the fundamental Doctrines of the Gospel, which they were already well acquainted with; or rather, as I think, to their having no Need to be taught any Doctrines of Christian-Religion by these false Pretenders to it, who industriously set themselves to pervert it.

in the Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, at his Coming (1 Thes. ii. 19, 20.)

29 *If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth Righteousness is born of him.*

29. This is the Hope we have concerning you now; and since, (*m*) as we trust, ye have right Thoughts of Christ, as the righteous and holy one, who *loves Righteousness and hates Iniquity*, (Ps. xlv. 7.) and is the Author of all Righteousness in others, where-ever it is found; ye may from thence assuredly conclude, with an Application to yourselves, that every one who, like him, is a Lover and Practiser of those Things that are right and holy, in Imitation of him, and from a Principle of Faith in, and Love to him, is Partaker of a divine Nature, by his regenerating Spirit, and so is by the New Birth, as well as by gracious Adoption, (*Chap.* iii. 1.) a Child of God and Heir of eternal Glory. (*Rom.* viii. 14—17.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

How beautifully harmonious is the Tendency and Design of the Gospel, to caution Believers against all Sin, and to support them under a humbling Sense of their former Iniquities, and of their present disallowed Infirmities! The propitiatory Sacrifice of Christ, and his Advocacy founded upon it, are extended to all believing Sinners of the *Gentiles*, as well as of the *Jews*, through the whole World. But how vainly do any pretend to have a right Knowledge of Christ, or true Faith in him for their own Salvation, if they cast off a conscientious Regard to his Commandments! They give the Lie to their own Profession, and to the Truth itself, and have no sincere Love to him, which would engage them to a holy Imitation of him.—The Law of Love to his People is, for Substance, an old Commandment, but, for Circumstances, suited to the Light and Grace of the Gospel, is a new one; and whatever any one may pretend to, his loving his Christian-Brother, or not, is a plain Test of his either being truly enlightned, or remaining under the Power of Darkness. O how happy is their Condition, who walk in the Light of Truth and Holiness, whether they be Babes, young Men, or Fathers in Christ! The weakest Believer is forgiven all Trespasses for Christ's Sake, and has a filial Affection to God as his Father; the more grown Christian is established in the Faith, and has Strength from Christ for vanquishing the Temptations of the Devil and his Instruments; and the old experienced Christian is best acquainted with the *Antient of Days* and his eternal Counsels of Wisdom and Love. But, alas! What an Enemy is the Love of this World to the Love of God! As far as we are carried away with Pleasures, Riches, or Honours, which are all precarious, empty and perishing, so far are we estranged from the Love of God to us; and a predominant Love of this World is inconsistent with a true Love to him, who cannot be the Author of any evil Influence, that the Things of Flesh and Sense make upon us.——How dangerous are the Schemes of Men of an Anti-Christian-Spirit, which has worked in all Ages of the Church! When Professors of Christ's Name go into it; this makes it evident that they never were sincere Believers; for they would otherwise undoubtedly have persisted in the Faith and Fellowship of the Gospel. But O what a blessed and holy Unction of the Spirit have true Believers from their exalted Head and Saviour! By this they are well satisfied about the Truth of all the fundamental Articles of the Gospel, insomuch that they don't need to be always taught the first Rudiments of Christianity; much less to be taught any of its Doctrines by false Pretenders to it. All that deny Jesus to be the Son of God and the only Saviour, are *Antichristians*, and constructively deny both the Father and Son; but all that cordially believe the Doctrine, originally delivered in the Gospel concerning these divine Persons, have a sure Interest in them both. The great Promise of eternal Life belongs to them; and they, being enabled to persist in their most holy Faith, continue in Union and Communion with Christ, to their own and their faithful Pastor's Joy and Confidence, at his second and most glorious Appearing: And they that have such just and

impressive Sentiments of his Purity and Holiness, as produce an effectual Change upon them in Resemblance of him, may certainly conclude that they are Partakers of a new and spiritual Birth from him, and have the Inheritance of Children, even unto eternal Life.

CHAP. III.

The Apostle breaks out into Admiration of the Love of God in making Believers his Children, 1, 2. *Shews the purifying Influence of a Hope of seeing Christ and bearing his Likeness, and the Inconsistency of pretending to this Hope, and living in Sin,* 3—10. *Makes Love to the Brethren, a distinguishing Character of real Christians,* 11—15. *Describes that Love by such of its Actings, as prove it to a Man's own Conscience to be sincere,* 16—21. *And represents the Advantage of Faith, Love and Obedience,* 22—24.

TEXT.

1 BEHOLD, *what Manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God. Therefore the World knoweth us not, because it knew him not.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. BEHOLD, with Attention and Admiration, Gratitude, Joy and Praise, what an affecting and distinguishing sort of free and transcendent Love the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Father of Mercies in and through him, has vouchsafed to us who are born of God, (*Chap.* ii. 29.) that, in the Riches of his Condescension and Grace, he should put such a high Honour upon us, who are in ourselves altogether worthless, mean, vile and contemptible Sinners, both by Nature and Practice, as to adopt us into his Family, that we might not only bear the Name, but enjoy all the Blessings and Privileges, which, answerable to our Dignity, belong to the regenerated Sons of God; (*John* i. 12, 13.) and might be accounted, owned and dealt with, as such. It need not therefore be wondered at, (*ver.* 13.) that the Men of this World, whose Hearts are carnal, and averse to all that is good and holy, don't esteem, affect and own, but rather hate us, who bear his Image; because they are ignorant of the true Nature of God, and neither approve of, nor acknowledge either the Father, or the Son. (*Chap.* ii. 23.) *

2 *Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall*

2. But let them think and speak of us as they will; This, beloved of the Lord, and therefore of me, is our Comfort and Glory, that though our natural, and lamented sinful Infirmities be great and many, and the Figure we make in Life be

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* As to *know* often signifies to *approve*; so *not to know* signifies to *disapprove*. (See the Notes on *Matth.* vii. 23, and *Rom.* viii. 29.) And *it knew him not* seems to refer to Christ, and the ill Treatment he met with in the World, on Account of which he said to his Disciples. (*John* xv. 18, 19.) *If the World hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the World, the World would love his own; but because ye are not of the World, but I have chosen you out of the World, therefore the World hates you.* This is parallel to, and casts a Light upon, the Passage before us, and in *ver.* 13; and might probably be in the Apostle's Mind now: And in the following Verses, which are immediately connected with this, he manifestly speaks of Christ, pointing him out in such a Manner, as necessarily leads our Thoughts to him. (See the Note on Chap. ii. 3.)

ever

be: But we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

ever so mean and despicable, and they revile and hate us; yet we actually are already the Sons of God, not by Nature, as our blessed Lord is, nor merely by Creation, as the holy Angels are; (*Job* xxxviii. 7) but by the special Grace of Regeneration and Adoption, and of Marriage-Union with his essential Son: And so great is the Dignity and Happiness of this Relation, that it is impossible for us, much more for the Men of this World, to conceive what sublime Riches, Honours and Delights we shall hereafter be advanced to, answerable to it. But thus far we know in the Light of Faith, and by the Witness of the Spirit, according to the Word of God, that when our glorious Lord himself shall appear the second Time to Salvation, *we shall appear with him in Glory*; (Col. iii. 4) and shall bear his amiable and illustrious Image of Light and Love, Holiness and Happiness in our Souls; and even *our Bodies* themselves *shall be fashioned like unto his glorious Body*: (Phil. iii. 21.) For we shall be admitted to a beatific and transforming Vision, *not in a Glass darkly, but Face to Face*; (1 Cor. xiii. 12) and shall see and enjoy him in his divine and mediatorial Glory, as shining forth in his exalted human Nature just as he is. (*John* xvii. 24. See the Note on 2 *Cor.* iii. 18.)

3 *And every Man that hath this Hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*

3. And every Believer, who has a well-grounded Hope of all this, cannot but be influenced by it, while he is in this World, to aim at and endeavour, through divine Grace, to attain all possible Purity in Heart and Life, in Imitation of, and Conformity to him, who is superlatively pure and holy, and will admit of none, but holy Ones, to see his Face with Comfort. (*Heb.* vii. 26, and xii. 14.)

4 *Whosoever committeth Sin transgresseth also the Law: For Sin is the Transgression of the Law.*

4. Whoever he be that lives in any known Sin, as a wilful Evil-doer, or Worker of Iniquity, (ὁ ποιῶν ἁμαρτίαν, see the Note on *ver.* 6) that Man not only sinneth against the Light, Grace and Obligations of the Gospel; but, as though he were lawless, goes into a manifest Violation even of the moral Law, which is holy, just and good: For the strict and proper Notion of Sin is a Deviation from, or Contrariety in Thought, Word, or Deed to, the Law of God, that unchangeable Rule of Righteousness, which is a Transcript of his holy Nature and Will; and *where no Law is, there is no Transgression.* (Rom. iv. 15)

5 *And ye know that he was manifested to take away our Sins: And in him is no Sin.*

5. And that the allow'd Practice of any Sin is utterly inconsistent with good Hope of seeing Christ, and being like him, at his second Coming, is evident; For ye know from the whole Tenor of the Gospel, that he was manifested in the Flesh at his first appearing, (ἵνα) to this very End and Purpose, that by the Sacrifice of himself he might effectually deliver us from the Guilt, and, in Consequence thereof, from the Power, and, at length, from all Defilement and Inbeing of our Sins: And he is, and ever was so absolutely sinless, as to need no Expiation for himself, and as to have no Fellowship with them that walk in Darkness. (*Chap.* i. 6.)

6. From

6 Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: Whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.

6. From hence it plainly follows, that whoever abides in him by vital and influential Union and Communion with him, as all true Believers do, like Branches in the Vine, (*John* xv. 5) doth not deliberately, habitually, presumptuously and willingly sin †: He that sinneth, at this Rate, has never had any realizing View by Faith of him; nor any experimental and saving Acquaintance, or Communion with him.

7 Little Children, let no Man deceive you. He that doeth Righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

7. Take heed, my dear Children, that no false Pretenders impose upon you, and lead you astray from the Path of Truth and Duty: Set it down as a certain Conclusion, that he, and he only, who, from Principles of Faith and Love, conscientiously and habitually works Righteousness (ο ποιων την δικαιοσυνην) in his religious Behaviour toward God, and upright Dealings with Men, is both inherently and actively righteous, according to his Measure and Degree, in Imitation of the blessed Jesus, who is the *Holy One*, (See the Paraphrase on *Chap.* ii. 20) and loves Righteousness, as well as spent his whole Life on Earth in an invariable Practice of it.

8 He that committeth Sin is of the Devil; for the Devil sinneth from the Beginning. For this Purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the Works of the Devil.

8. He who works Iniquity, as one that makes a Trade of it, (see the Note on *ver.* 6) is under the Power and Influence of the Devil, bears his odious Likeness, and doth his Will: For that great Enemy of God and Souls is an old Offender, persisting in a Course of all Iniquity himself, and practising the wicked Art of tempting and exciting others to sin, ever since the Beginning of the World, when he sinned, and drew other apostate Angels into Sin, as also our first Parents into their horrible Defection from God and his Law, to the Ruin of themselves, and all their natural Offspring in their several Generations. And this is so directly contrary to every Thing, said and done, or countenanced by Christ, that he, the eternal Son of God, came into the World, and was made known in his saving Office, as sent of the Father to this great End and Design, that, by his Doctrine, Obedience and Sufferings unto Death, he might dissolve the whole Frame of those evil Works, Sin, Misery, and Death natural, spiritual and eternal, which the Devil propagates and carries on, that they, who believe in Christ Jesus, and hope to live with him and to be like him for ever, (*ver.* 2)

† We are not to imagine the Apostle's Meaning to be, that a true Christian never sins; for this would be to make him directly contradict what he had said, *Chap.* i. 8, 9. about *deceiving ourselves, if we say we have no Sin*, and about the Duty of *confessing our Sins*, which supposes us to have Occasion so to do. And therefore *he sinneth not* must be understood in some such Sense, as is given in the Paraphrase; and is sufficiently explained in several other Verses of this Context, which we render *committeth Sin*, but the Expressions in the *Greek* (ποιων, and ποιειν αμαρτιαν) are very strong, and signify committing it as *Practisers, Workers,* or *Doers* of it with Freedom and Choice, like Persons who make a Trade of it: And it is the very same Expression that our Lord used when he said, (*John* viii. 34) *Whosoever committeth Sin* (ο ποιων την αμαρτιαν) *is the Servant of Sin*; and our Apostle says, *ver.* 8, *He that committeth Sin* (ο ποιων αμαρτιαν) *is of the Devil*, and *ver.* 16, *whosoever is born of God doth not commit Sin* (αμαρτιαν ου ποιει).

might be delivered from the Guilt and Dominion of Sin, and live no longer in it here; and might, at length, be intirely freed from all Remainders of it, and from all its dreadful Fruits and Effects for ever hereafter.

9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit Sin; for his Seed remaineth in him: And he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

9. The Sum then of what I am saying is this, Whosoever he be that is Partaker of a divine Nature, by the regenerating Spirit, is no longer a Doer or Worker of Iniquity, like other Men, or like the Devil who *sinneth from the Beginning:* (ver. 8) For that divine Principle of Grace, which is infused into him, by means of the incorruptible Seed of the Word, (1 *Pet.* i. 23) has an abiding Root and Residence in him, to rule and govern him; and he has such a thorough Hatred of all Iniquity, that he cannot give himself Liberty to sin with Deliberation and full Consent, as he used to do; (See the Note on *ver.* 6) he cannot love and live in Sin; and when, through Temptation, Surprize, or Inadvertence, he at any Time falls into it, he cannot but, upon Conviction, sorely repent of it, as *David* and *Peter* did, because he, as a Child of God, and born of the Spirit, has received a Principle of Grace, that wills and works in direct Opposition to all Sin, as Sin; (*Gal.* v. 17) much less can he sin upon the Score, or by Virtue of his being born of God, as though his new Birth were a Licence for it, or had any Tendency towards it.

10 In this the Children of God are manifest, and the Children of the Devil: Whosoever doeth not Righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his Brother.

10. This therefore is the great distinguishing Difference, by which they who are truly born of God, and so become his Children, and they who are still under the Power of the Devil, as their Father, to do his Works, and live according to his Will, (*John* viii. 44) are openly discovered, known and proved to be so respectively. Let People's Pretences be what they will; It is certain, that whosoever doth not love, and live in the Practice of Religion and Morality, both which may be included in the Notion of Righteousness, is not born of God, or Partaker of the Nature of his Children; no more is he, who has not a sincere and cordial Affection toward his Christian-Brother, as such.

11 For this is the Message that ye heard from the Beginning, that we should love one another.

11. For this is one great Part of that practical Doctrine, which our blessed Lord committed as a Charge to us, his Apostles and Servants, and which we preached, and ye heard and received from the very first Publication of the Gospel, relating to what he requires of his Disciples and Followers, (*John* xiii. 34, and xv. 12, 17) that we, who claim Relation to him, and Interest in him, should maintain a brotherly Affection, and discover it in the best Manner, and by all suitable Endearments and Services, one towards another.

12 *Not as Cain,* who *was of that wicked One, and slew his Brother. And wherefore slew he*

12. We are by no Means to be like *Cain*, the First-born of our fallen Parents, and among all their Descendents the first notorious Child of the Devil, *that* eminently wicked and malicious *Murderer from the Beginning* of the World; (*John* viii. 44) and under the Power of whose malignant Influence,

him? Because his own Works were evil, and his Brother's righteous.

fluence, as he *works in the Children of Disobedience*, (Eph. ii. 2.) *Cain* cruelly murder'd his Brother *Abel*. And what was the Reason of his contriving and committing that monstrously unlawful and barbarous Act of Violence against him? Why, truely, it was only because he himself was a wicked Wretch, and, his Services not being duly performed, God rejected both him and them; and because his Brother was a righteous Man, and his Sacrifice, offered with Faith in the Messiah's Atonement, was good and acceptable in the Sight of God, who had a Respect to him and his Offering, and shew'd it in such a Manner, as testified that he was righteous. (*Gen.* iv. 3—8, and *Heb.* xi. 4. See the Note there.)

13 *Marvel not, my Brethren, if the World hate you.*

13. Ye need not therefore wonder, or count it a new or strange Thing, my dear Brethren, if, as is the Case of the present Day, the wicked Men of this World, who are the Seed of the Serpent, envy, hate and persecute you, who are the Seed of the Woman, between whom and them there is an irreconcileable Enmity, (*Gen.* iii. 15.) which soon discovered itself in *Cain*, (ver. 12.) and has work'd ever since in the Children of Disobedience.

14 *We know that we have passed from Death unto Life, because we love the Brethren. He that loveth not* his *Brother, abideth in Death.*

14. We, through Grace, are Men of a better Spirit, and may be very easy under all the Hatred of this World, since God himself loves us, (*ver.* 1.) and since we are translated from a State of Law-Condemnation to Death into a State of Justification to eternal Life; and are quickened from the Death of Sin to the Life of Righteousness: We are well assured that this is our happy Case, because our Hearts are formed unto an affectionate Love of all our Brethren in the Faith, Hope and Fellowship of the Gospel, merely upon this Consideration, that they belong to Christ, bear his Image, and are beloved of him. Whoever, on the contrary, is not effectually engaged, from such Principles and Motives to love his Brother in the Profession of the Gospel, continues still under the Power of spiritual Death, and in a State of Law-Condemnation, and lies exposed to everlasting Destruction, which is *the second Death.* (Rev. xx. 14.)

15 *Whosoever hateth his Brother, is a Murderer: And ye know that no Murderer hath eternal Life abiding in him.*

15. Let his Pretences be what they will, Every one who, instead of cultivating this Christian-Temper toward his Brother, indulges Wrath, Malice, Envy and Revenge, is guilty of the Sin of murdering him in his Heart; (*Matth.* v. 21, 22.) and such is the Rancour of his malignant Spirit, that were it left to take its own Course, and had it Opportunity, it would as surely carry him on to actual Murder itself, as *Cain*'s did, (*ver.* 12.) And ye know, from all that the Word of God says, that no Person, who is under the Power of such a wicked Disposition, much less an actual Murderer, who either has not Time, or not a Heart for *Repentance toward God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ*, which are necessary to Salvation, (*Acts* xx. 20, 21.) has any Right or Title to eternal Life, or any Principle of spiritual Life

residing in him, or any saving Grace, which is the Beginning of, and a Meetness for, and shall continue to, and issue in eternal Life.

16 *Hereby perceive we the Love of God, because he laid down his Life for us: And we ought to lay down our Lives for the Brethren.*

16. How contrary is this unmerciful Temper to that, which God the Son has shewn towards us! We may conceive something of the Greatness of his compassionate Love, from the most transcendent Instance that could be given of it; since he, who is *the eternal Word*, and *was made Flesh*, and so was truely and properly *God*-incarnate, (*John* i. 1, 14.) *has loved us and given himself for us, an Offering and a Sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling Savour*, (Eph. v. 2.) and freely *gave his Life a Ransom for many*. (Matth. xx. 28.) And we ought to be so deeply affected with, and influenced by this unparalell'd Love of Christ, as to stand ready after his Example, and in Imitation of his Love, to expose our own Lives, whenever he calls us to it, (as the Apostle *Paul* did his, *Phil.* ii. 17.) for encouraging the Faith and Hope of those holy Brethren, that have cost him so much, and are so dear to him; and for the Preservation and Safety of those, that are eminently serviceable to his Church, (as *Aquila* and *Priscilla laid down their own Necks for* that great Apostle's *Life.* Rom. xvi. 4.)

17 *But whoso hath this World's Good, and seeth his Brother have Need, and shutteth up his Bowels of* Compassion *from him, how dwelleth the Love of God in him?*

17. But if, instead of copying after this noble Pattern of Love, any Professor of Christ's Name, who, through the Bounty of Providence, has the Conveniencies and Comforts of this Life, see his Neighbour, and especially his Christian-Brother, in strait and necessitous Circumstances, and harden his Heart against him; and, like one that has no Tenderness or Pity for the Distressed, will give him no Relief, How scandalously short doth he fall of that Love, which God requires, and has given the most affecting Example of in his Son? How can such an one pretend to an Interest in God's Love to him; or that the sincere Love, which God enjoins, and is the Author and the Object of, and which inclines the Heart to a fervent Love of the Brethren for his Sake, has any Place in him? (*Jam.* ii. 15, 16.)

18 *My little Children, let us not love in Word, neither in Tongue, but in Deed, and in Truth.*

18. Let us take heed, my dear Children, that our Professions of Love to our Fellow-Christians be *without Dissimulation*; (Rom. xii. 9.) that it be not all Compliment without any Meaning; nor merely kind Expressions without any suitable Affection toward them, or doing what we can for their Help and Comfort in spiritual and temporal Concerns; but let it demonstrate itself in Acts of Beneficence and Service as Occasions require, and in all Offices of substantial Friendship, according to our Professions, and the true Nature of Christian-Charity.

19 *And hereby we know that we are of the Truth, and shall assure our Hearts before him,*

19. And by a Prevalence of this excellent Temper and Conduct, we may be well satisfied that *God of his own Will has begotten us with the Word of Truth*, (Jam. i. 18.) and has brought us to understand, believe, and live under the Government of the true Principles of the Gospel, as sincere Christians;

Christians; and hereupon we shall be enabled to persuade (πείσομεν) our own Hearts, that we have such manifest Tokens and Fruits of his effectual Operation upon us, as will embolden our humble Appeal to him for our Integrity, in his Sight and Presence, both now and at the Day of Judgment, whatever Censures the World may pass upon us: And this is a sweet and solid Joy that frees us from the stinging Reproaches of a self-condemning Conscience. (2 *Cor.* i. 12.)

20 *For if our Heart condemn us, God is greater than our Heart, and knoweth all Things.*

20. For if our Consciences, which are *the Candle of the Lord, searching all the inward Parts of the Belly,* (Prov. xx. 27.) witness against, accuse and condemn us for designed or allowed Hypocrisy in our Professions of Love, and of Adherence to the Truth of the Gospel, it is very awful to consider, as we ought, that the Heart-searching God is an infinitely higher, more impartial and critical Judge of the true State of our Case, and is greater in Purity and Holiness, as well as in Power to condemn all Iniquity, than our own Hearts can be; and it is most dreadful of all to be disapproved of him, whose Judgment must and will stand for ever, and who has a perfectly comprehensive Knowledge of all Things, even of the most secret Thoughts and Intents of the Heart: (1 *Kings* viii. 39, and *Rev.* ii. 23.) And therefore he not only confirms the Sentence, which Conscience justly passes in his Name; but sees and condemns many Things in us, that escape our own Observation.

21 *Beloved, if our Hearts condemn us not,* then *have we Confidence towards God.*

21. But on the contrary, my dearly beloved, If, while we can't but be sensible of many lamented Imperfections, our own Consciences, upon due Deliberation under the Enlightnings and Witnessings of the Spirit, according to the Truth of the Gospel, acquit us from all Charges of reigning or allowed Guile; then, in Proportion to our Consciousness of this, we may have humble Boldness in our Claim of God, as our God and Father, and in our Professions of Love to him and our Fellow-Christians for his Sake, and in an Appeal to him, like that of *Peter,* (John xxi. 17.) about the Sincerity of our Hearts therein; yea, we may have (παῤῥησίαν) a holy Freedom, Courage and Liberty of Soul in our fiducial Pleas with him.

22 *And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his Commandments, and do those Things that are pleasing in his Sight.*

22. And what good Things soever we sincerely and humbly pray for according to his Will, with Faith in the Name of Jesus, and for right Ends, (*Chap.* v. 14, *John* xiv. 13, 14, and xvi. 23, and *Jam.* iv. 3.) we are, or in due Time shall be Partakers of them by his free Favour, through his beloved Son, as far as he sees may be most for his Glory, and best for us: And we, with holy *David,* (Ps. cxix. 6.) may be humbly confident of this; because, as an Evidence of our Interest in his Favour, we, through the Grace bestowed upon us, have an unfeigned *Respect to all his Commandments,* and endeavour to do such Things, as are acceptable and well pleasing in his Sight by Jesus Christ. (1 *Pet.* ii. 5.)

23. And

23 *And this is his Commandment, that we should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us Commandment.*

23. And this is the great Commandment of God, which is fundamental to, and comprehensive of all the rest; that we should heartily embrace and trust in his Son Jesus Christ for ourselves, according to the Gospel-Revelation of him, as the only and all-sufficient Saviour of lost Sinners; and that from this Principle of Faith in him, as also for proving the Truth of it in its *working by Love*, (Gal. v. 6.) we should have, and exercise a cordial Affection one towards another, as Members together of his mystical Body, in Obedience to the Commandment, which he gave to all his Disciples. (*John* xiii. 34, and xv. 12.)

24 *And he that keepeth his Commandments, dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.*

24. And whoever is brought to yield a conscientious Obedience to all his Commandments, from a Principle of Faith as working by Love, which counts none of them grievous, (*Chap.* v. 3.) he really doth, and hereby makes it evident that he doth live in a State of vital Union with him, and with the Father through him, and that *Christ dwells in his Heart by Faith*, who is *a Habitation of God through the Spirit*: (Eph. ii. 22, and iii. 17.) And we who stand in this near and happy Relation to Christ, and to the Father through him, are assured that he lives with abiding Influence in us, by the Light, Energy and Witness of the Holy Spirit, which he has freely given us, to produce, excite, and assist an Exercise of Faith and Love, and every other Grace in our Souls.

RECOLLECTIONS.

Who can sufficiently admire, and be affected with the Love of God in making such contemptible, ill-deserving Creatures as we are, his Children by special Grace! Though the Men of this World despise and hate them, they are already the Sons of God. And who can conceive the Dignity and Delights, which they will be advanced to, when they shall see Christ in all his Glory, and be made as like as possible to him! O the Happiness of a well-grounded Hope of this for ourselves; and of an Experience of its purifying Effects upon us! These appear in the holy Turn that is given to our Hearts and Lives by a Principle of Grace, which works in direct Opposition to all Iniquity, and excites us to all the Duties of Piety toward God and Righteousness toward Men, and to an Imitation of the righteous and holy Jesus, who was himself absolutely sinless, and was manifested in our Nature to take away our Sins, and to destroy the Works of the Devil, that wicked Offender, Murderer and Promoter of Sin and Ruin from the Beginning of the World.—Of all the divine Commandments, Faith and Love are the chief; Faith as working by Love; and Love as taking Pleasure in keeping every other Commandment. And O how important is it, that, from these noble Principles, we affectionately love our Christian-Brethren, as such; and *that* not in Word only, but in Deed and in Truth, even unto a Readiness, if need be, to lay down our Lives for their Preservation and Confirmation in the Faith, as Christ, who was truely and properly God-incarnate, laid down his own Life in his matchless Love for our Redemption! By these distinguishing Characters, and by his Spirit given to us, we may know that we are passed from Death to Life, and that he abides in us, and we in him; and may be humbly confident toward God, that we have a saving Acquaintance with the Truth of the Gospel; that we are sincere in our Profession of it, and are born of God; and that he, in his own Time and Way, will give us whatsoever we ask of him according to his Will. But, alas! How vain are all Pretences to these glorious Privileges and Blessings, if none of the forementioned Dispositions, but the contrary to them prevail in us! If we habitually live in a Course of any known Sin as Evil-Doers; if we are not Practisers of Righteousness, and, instead of loving, hate the Children of God,

and *that* because they are more righteous and holy than ourselves; and, instead of having Bowels of Compassion toward them, or relieving their Wants, we could willingly persecute them, even unto Death, as *Cain* did his righteous Brother *Abel*, How can we pretend to have any Love to God; or that we are his Sons, born of him, or have any true Knowledge of him, or any Principle of spiritual and eternal Life, which no Murderer in Heart, much less in Fact, can have in him? No, no, Let not any Man deceive us: These Things evidently mark out the Children of the Devil, in Distinction from the Children of God; and all such continue under the Power of spiritual Death, in Opposition to them that have eternal Life. How much therefore doth it concern every one of us to enquire, In which of these Ranks we stand? Whether our Consciences acquit, or condemn us in the Judgment they pass, upon serious Deliberation, about our own State, Temper and Way before God? And O how careful ought we to be in forming that Judgment concerning ourselves, since the infinitely great and holy God, who knows our Hearts, is the supreme Judge of all; and by his Judgment we must stand, or fall for ever!

CHAP. IV.

The Apostle cautions Believers against giving Heed to every one, that pretends to the Spirit, and shews how to distinguish the true from the false Claimants of it, 1—6. Then returns to his darling Topic of brotherly Love, as a proper Characteristic of sincere Christians, enforcing it upon them by various weighty Considerations, 7—21.

TEXT.

1 *BEloved, believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they are of God: Because many false Prophets are gone out into the World.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. TAKE heed, dearly beloved, to whom God has given his Spirit, (*Chap.* iii. 24.) that ye hearken not to, and be not seduced by every Pretender to the Spirit of God, nor by every Doctrine, (*ver.* 2, 3.) that he broaches under Colour of extraordinary Light and immediate Revelation: But, before ye give any Credit to, and fall in with those, that make such high Professions, carefully examine, and prove by the Touch-stone of the Word, (*Isa.* viii. 20.) what Manner of Spirit they are of, and are influenced by, and what Doctrines they preach; whether they carry plain Tokens of their being such, as are agreeable to the holy Nature and revealed Will of God, and derive their Original from him, or not. And there is great Need of your being very cautious on this Head; because there are Swarms of Impostors at this Day, who, according to our Lord's Prediction, are gone abroad, and make a great Noise in the World, endeavouring (*if it were possible*) *to deceive the very Elect.* (Matth. xxiv. 24.)

2 *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every Spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, is of God.*

2. Now, to give you a certain Mark, whereby ye may know who are taught and inspired by the Spirit of God, and who are not, but are acted by a Spirit of Delusion, or would fallaciously impose upon you; It is necessary for you to observe, that every one, who, under Professions of preaching by the Light and Inspiration of the Spirit, cordially believes, freely owns, and boldly professes his Faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as the eternal Word, who is God, and the only begotten of the Father, and has actually

ally been made Flesh, and dwelt amongst us, (*John* i. 1, 14. See the Notes there) * and came into an incarnate State to fulfil all Righteousness, and take away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself, and is to be intirely trusted in, as the only true Messiah, for eternal Life; such an one really is what he professes to be, and speaks by the Authority and Inspiration of God according to his Mind and Will, and is himself born of God.

3 *And every Spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh is not of God. And this is that* Spirit *of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the World.*

3. And, on the contrary, every Pretender to preach by the Inspiration of the Spirit, that don't believe and own, but denies that Jesus Christ is the only true Messiah, who as the eternal Son of God has assumed a real human Body, as well as reasonable Soul, and taken upon him the Form of a Servant, and become obedient unto Death (*Phil.* ii. 7, 8.) for the Redemption of his People; such an one is neither sent, nor approved of God, nor enlightned by his Spirit, nor born of him: And the Spirit by which he is governed, is that very Spirit of Opposition to Christ and his Gospel, concerning which ye have heard from our Lord and his Apostles, as has been already hinted, (*Chap.* ii. 18, See the Paraphrase there) that it would rise and shew itself in the last Days; and it has now actually begun to appear and work in the World among the Impostors of this Day.

4 *Ye are of God, little Children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the World.*

4. But ye, my dear Children, are born of God, and are taught by *the Unction* which ye have received *from the Holy One*, even by *the Spirit which he has given you*, (Chap. ii. 20, 27, and iii. 24.) that ye might not be carried away by their Delusions; and ye have been enabled to withstand these Impostors, and their Errors in Doctrine and Practice, and to gain a noble Conquest over them, by the Stedfastness of your Faith, Profession and Obedience; and ye will still be more than a Match for them all, because he, who dwells in you by his Spirit, is infinitely superior, in Wisdom and Power, to that Antichristian-Spirit which is gone forth into the World, and to Satan himself, under whom it Acts, and who *Works in the Children of Disobedience.* (Eph. ii. 2.)

5 *They are of the World: therefore speak they of the World, and the World heareth them.*

5. These Deceivers that think, talk and act under his Influence, are Men of carnal Minds, *who walk according to the Course of this World*; (Eph. ii. 2.) whose Views and Interests are all of a temporal Nature, relating to the Riches, Honours and Pleasures of this present evil World: They therefore propagate such Notions of secular Domi-

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* *Every Spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh* (παν πνευμα ο ομολογει Ιησουν Χριστον εν σαρκι εληλυθοτα) might be more justly rendered, *Every Spirit that confesses Jesus Christ, who has come in the Flesh*; and so *Christ himself* is the Subject of the Confession *in all his Characters*, and not barely that particular Assertion, *that he is come in the Flesh*, which I take to be only such a Description of him, as is indeed essential to, and included in, though it be not the Whole of, what is to be confessed concerning him: And they who, on the contrary, deny that Christ came to offer up himself, as a Sacrifice to satisfy divine Justice and make Atonement for Sin, do, in effect, deny him to be come in the Flesh for the main Purpose, for which God his Father sent him.

nion and Grandeur under the Messiah, as are agreeable to Men of a like worldly Temper with themselves; and unregenerate People, who place their Happiness in the Things of this World, hearken to them, and greedily suck in their corrupt Doctrines, as being most suitable, of all others, to their own sensual Inclination and Taste.

6 We are of God. He that knoweth God heareth us: He that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the Spirit of Truth, and the Spirit of Error.

6. But we, who preach an incarnate and crucified Saviour, are inlightned, approved, sent and owned, as well as born of God; and therefore every one that truly knows any Thing of God, and is well affected toward him, according to the Discoveries he has made of himself in Christ by the Gospel, diligently attends to, and heartily embraces the divine Truths, which we have received by Revelation from him: But he that is not born of God, by his inlightning and renewing Influence, pays no Regard to the spiritual Doctrine we deliver concerning Christ, as the only true Messiah, who is come in the Flesh; (*ver.* 3.) nor will believe, or adhere to us who preach it. This is a distinguishing Character, whereby we may easily and clearly discern, on one hand, the Spirit of Truth and its Preachers, and, on the other, the Spirit of Falshood and Delusion, and what an evil Spirit they are under the Power of, who propagate Antichristian Errors, and wicked Practices according to them.

7 Beloved, let us love one another: for Love is of God; and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God.

7. Now, to return to what I greatly aim at in this Epistle, Let it be our diligent Care, beloved of the Lord and therefore of me, to maintain, express and shew forth the most sincere and brotherly Affection one towards another: For this excellent Grace is the Fruit of the Spirit, the Birth and Offspring of God himself, who begets, commands and approves of it. And every one, that cultivates and exemplifies this amiable Principle, is a Child of God, regenerated by his Spirit; and has an experimental, appropriating and transforming Knowledge of the Perfections and Will of God, and particularly of his Love.

8 He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is Love.

8. He, on the contrary, that is a Stranger to this Christian Love, is unacquainted with the Nature and Will of God. For God † is all Love, he is the Perfection of it in his Propensions, Thoughts, Purposes and Dispensations of every Kind, as though he were nothing but Love toward his Children, and in his Will to promote a like Affection in them to one another: He therefore is a complete Pattern of it, worthy of our Imitation, though it is absolutely impossible for us to come up to any Thing near an Equality

† God is often stiled *holy, righteous, just, good* and *gracious, wise, powerful, true* and *faithful*; and the like; but I don't recollect that he is ever said, in the *Abstract*, to be *Holiness, Righteousness, Justice, Goodness* &c, as he is said to be *Love*: Which may intimate that this is the darling and reigning Attribute that sheds a most amiable Glory upon all his other Perfections, and upon all his Designs and Performances with regard to his People.

to him in it, as appears, if we only consider the following eminent Demonstration of it.

9 *In this was manifested the Love of God towards us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the World, that we might live through him.*

9. The astonishing, self-moving and condescending Love of the great God to us broke out, and was displayed with the brightest and most affecting Evidence in this matchless Instance of it, namely, that in the Fulness of Time God, according to his eternal Purpose of Love and Grace, sent forth his own divine and only begotten Son, in a Way of special Operation, into this lower World, to assume human Nature into personal Union with himself, or to be *made of a Woman, made under the Law to redeem them that were under the Law,* (Gal. iv. 4, 5.) *that through his Merit and Righteousness* we, who believe in him, *might not perish, but have everlasting Life.* (John iii. 16.)

10 *Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son* to be *the Propitiation for our Sins.*

10. In this there really was, and most evidently appeared to be unparalelled Love, not to Friends or Persons lovely in themselves, but to *Enemies*, *Sinners*, and *ungodly* Wretches; (*Rom.* v. 6, 8, 10.) not from any Consideration or Foresight of previous Love in us toward him to move him to it, but from his own mere undeserved and preventing Love and Grace, by which he was before-hand with us; (*ver.* 19.) and, in the Greatness of that Love, he sent his own supremely beloved and only begotten Son to bleed, suffer and die in our Nature and Stead, and thereby make an effectual Atonement, to the full Satisfaction of divine Justice, for our great and multiplied Offences, which otherwise must have been charged and punished upon us to our eternal Destruction.

11 *Beloved, if God, so loved us, we ought also to love one another.*

11. How great, ye dearly beloved of God and me, are the Constraints of this Love! If God loved us at so high and astonishing a Rate as this; We, whom he thus loved, and redeemed by the precious Blood of his Son, most certainly ought, in Imitation of him, and as influenced by his superlative Love, to keep up the most ardent Affection one towards another, as Christian-Brethren, for his Sake, and in Obedience to his Commandment. *(ver.* 21.)

12 *No Man hath seen God at any Time. If we Love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his Love is perfected in us.*

12. God himself is an invisible Spirit, *whom no Man has seen, nor can see* with bodily Eyes, (1 *Tim.* vi. 16.) to move his Affection to him; but the Objects of his Love, who bear his holy Image, are visible, daily seen and conversed with, that we might be induced to testify our Love to him, by shewing it for his Sake to them. (See *ver.* 20*)* If therefore we love one another, as Children of his own Likeness, this is a Proof of our Love to him, and it hereby appears that he dwells in us by his Spirit to produce this Love; and both his Love to us has hereby manifested itself, and attained its End and Design to a good Degree in us; * and our Love to him is hereby brought to its true

* *His Love* (ἡ ἀγάπη αὐτοῦ) may be considered either *subjectively* for the Love that is in him to us, or *objectively* for the Love we have to him. (See the Note on *Chap.* ii, 15.) But, which ever Way we

true Form, and exercised with Eminence, and is proved to be sincere in us.

13 *Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.*

13. By this we have a comfortable Evidence of a mutual Inhabitation between God and us; of our dwelling by Faith and Love in Union and Communion, through Jesus Christ, with him; and of his dwelling by gracious Manifestations and Influences in our Souls; because he has freely afforded us rich Communications of his Spirit to beget and animate this Faith and Love, and to cast a Light upon his own Work in us.

14 *And we have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son* to be *the Saviour of the World.*

14. And we, the Apostles of Christ, have seen him with our bodily Eyes (*Chap.* i. 1.) in his human Nature, Preaching and Miracles, Sufferings, Death, Resurrection and Ascension to Glory; and we now bear Witness, upon infallible Evidence, that the eternal Father has actually sent his only begotten Son, to take upon him our Nature; and by the Course of Obedience and Sufferings, which in that humble State he fulfilled, to be the Redeemer and Saviour of both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that do, or ever shall believe in him throughout the World, (See the Note on *John* iii. 16.) according to antient Prophecies that *the Desire of all Nations should come*, (Hag. ii. 7.) and that *in him all Nations of the Earth should be blessed.* (Gen. xxii. 18.)

15 *Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.*

15. Whosoever therefore shall from a Principle of Faith, which works by Love, boldly own and declare his Belief with full Assent and Consent, in the Face of all Opposition and Danger, in these perilous Days, that Jesus is this eminently peculiar Son of God, and the only Saviour of Sinners, it is thereby manifest that God dwells in him by his Spirit, which has led him into these just and exalted Sentiments of Christ, with a firm Adherence to him; and that he dwells in God, by Faith and Love, through the great Mediator.

16 *And we have known and believed the Love that God hath to us. God is Love: and he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.*

16. And we, who are blessed with an Experience of this, have been well assured, and fully perswaded, on the Foot of the Gospel-Revelation, and the concurring Witness of the Spirit with our Spirits, that the most peculiar, transcendent, free and distinguishing Love is in the Heart of God towards us, and is manifested by his *sending his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins, that we might live through him.* (ver. 9. 10.) By this it plainly appears, as has been observed, (*ver.* 8. See the Note there) that God is all Love to us, and there is no Fury in him against us; and we may certainly conclude from thence, that whoever lives under the Power of a hearty Love to him, and to his Children for his Sake, is so assimulated to the God of Love,

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we take it, *His Love being perfected in us* is not to be understood, as though either his Love to us, or ours to him, had in this World completely attained all its Ends, and produced the whole of its Effects; but both his Love and ours may be said to be *perfected in us*, much after the same Manner, as *his Strength* is said to be *made perfect*, or manifested with great Advantage *in our Weakness*; (2 Cor. xii. 9.) and as *Faith* is said to be *made perfect* or demonstrated to be sincere, genuine and eminent *by Works*. (*Jam.* ii. 22.)

as to abide in a reciprocal Union and Communion with him.

17 Herein is our Love made perfect, that we may have Boldness in the Day of Judgement: because as he is, so are we in this World.

17. By our thus dwelling in Love, it is evidently proved to be sincere and of considerable Strength; (See the Note on *ver.* 12.) and it having this plain Token of God's Love to us, we may assuredly hope to appear with humble Confidence before him, as true Believers, in the awful Day of Judgment; because as he is all Love to us, so we in Resemblance of him, and in Consideration of his Love, are filled with a supreme Love to him, and with a sincere and ardent Love to the Brethren for his Sake, even while we live in this tempting and ensnaring World.

18 There is no Fear in Love; but perfect Love casteth out Fear: because Fear hath Torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in Love.

18. This Love is of such a delightful Nature, that, though it be ever attended with a holy filial Reverence of God, and cautious Fear of offending him; yet, as we thereby *know that we have passed from Death to Life*, (Chap. iii. 14.) there is no distrustful, despairing, or terrifying Fear of God in it, as if he were our Enemy: But a sincere Love to him, and to Fellow-Christians for his Sake, especially when it is exalted to its highest Pitch and Fervour, under an assuring Sense of his Love to us, banishes all diffident, slavish Fear of God; because this sort of Fear is a most distressing Passion, utterly inconsistent with a prevailing Sense of his Love, and with the Sweetness, Pleasure and Confidence of a complacential Love to him. It is a plain Consequence from hence, that he who has a servile Dread of God, as an Enemy, is far from living under the Power of that delightful Love, which springs from Faith, and considers him as a reconciled God and Father in Christ, and as the most amiable Object, infinitely lovely in himself, and all Love to us, (*ver.* 16.)

19 We love him, because he first loved us.

19. Our Love to him is kindled by, and is the Fruit and Effect of his own free Love to us. He was first in his Love to us, which eternally delighted in all his Thoughts, Schemes and Purposes of glorifying himself in our Recovery and Salvation by his Son, and which is the original Cause and Pattern of all our Love to him; and the Manifestations of his Love to us, and our Sense of it and Reflections upon it, are the powerful Motives of ours again to him; our Hearts having before been alienated from him, and never would have been in Love with him, had he not first loved us, and given us some Discoveries of it to induce our Love to him again.

20 If a Man say, I love God, and hateth his Brother, he is a Liar: for he that loveth not his Brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

20. This Love to God is so inseparably connected with Love to his Children, that if any one pretends to say, I love God, and at the same Time bears an uncharitable, irreconcileable and malicious Temper toward his Christian-Brother, he acts inconsistently with, and gives the Lie to his own Profession, and to all that the holy Scriptures say about sincere Love to God, which includes a Love to all that bear his Image and belong to him: For whoever he be that has not a cordial Affection to his Brother in the Faith

Faith and Fellowship of the Gospel, whom he has seen with his bodily Eyes, in whom he may also see visible Traces of the Image of God, and who is an Object daily presented to his Senses, to raise his Esteem of him, and move his Compassion and Kindness to him, as Occasions require; How is it likely, or even possible, that he should heartily love God, who is invisible to mortal Eyes, and makes no Impression of himself upon the external Senses, to affect the Heart and engage its Love to him, which can never be sincere without a conscientious Respect to all his Commandments? (See *Chap.* v. 3.)

21 *And this Commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God, love his Brother also.*

21. And this is one great and summary Commandment, which we have received from him, as ye have heard, (*Chap.* iii. 23) and which he has given us in the moral Law, and with further Explications and Enforcements by Jesus Christ in the Gospel, (*Matth.* xxii. 37—39, and *John* xv. 12, 17.) that he, who sincerely loves God, should also love his Christian-Brother, who bears his Father's Image, and is dear to him; and should make it appear by this, that he doth indeed unfeignedly love God.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a certain Test have private Christians, as well as others, in the Word of God, to distinguish between those that broach Errors concerning the divine Person and saving Offices of Christ, under Pretence of their having the Spirit of God; and those that, under his Guidance and Influence, preach the Truth as it is in Jesus, and cordially own and bravely profess, that he is the only begotten Son of God, and has really appeared in human Nature as the Saviour of lost Sinners among both *Jews* and *Gentiles*! All Pretenders to the Spirit are not of God, nor are to be believed and followed; and they that are born of God need not be stumbled at them, since there ever have been such in the World; and true Believers are enabled to see through them and their Delusions, and to withstand and overcome them; because God, who dwells in them by his Spirit, is infinitely greater, wiser and stronger, than the Devil, who works, and prevails by his Antichristian-Emissaries, upon carnal Men. And what Wonder is it, that People of a worldly Spirit should adhere to them, who are like themselves, and accommodate their Schemes and Discourses to their corrupt Taste? But the Servants of God speak from, and for him, according to his Mind and Will; and therefore are suitably regarded by those, and those only, that are well-affected in their Hearts toward him.——How astonishing is the free Love of God toward such sinful Creatures as we are, that he (as his inspired Servants testify) has sent his best beloved Son into the World to be the Propitiation for our Sins, that we might live in all Blessedness and Glory for ever with him! This is a high Demonstration indeed, that God is Love; and we must be utter Strangers to his amiable Excellencies, if we don't love him: Not that we are or can be before-hand with him in loving; for we love him, because he first loved us, and because we are brought, under its Influence and Manifestation, to know and believe it. This melts our Hearts and gains over our Affections to him, and to his Children for his Sake. And what a sure Token is this of our being born of God, and of his dwelling by his Spirit in us, and of our Union and Communion with him, as those whom he loves! But how vain and preposterous is it, for any to pretend that they have a true and hearty Love to that God, whom they never saw, if they have Enmity in their Souls against those, in whom his Image is visible, and whom they often see and converse with! This is giving the Lie to their own Profession, and to the Declarations of God in his Word, who has commanded that he who loves him, should love his Brother also. And when Love to God and one another is genuine and abounding, How sweet are its Workings! It banishes all slavish tormenting Fear of him and of his Wrath, which

is inconsistent with an affectionate complacential Love to him, and to his Children as such. But having this Evidence of our Interest in his Love, With what Satisfaction may we hope to appear before him with humble Boldness in the Day of Judgment, as those that are accepted of him, through his Son.

CHAP. V.

The Apostle concludes his Argument for brotherly Love, by shewing that it is the Effect of a new Birth, which produces such a Love to God, as makes Obedience to all his Commandments pleasant, and such a Faith in Christ, as overcomes this World, 1—5. *Then, to establish their Faith in Christ, he refers to three Witnesses in Heaven, and three on Earth, as concurring to prove that Jesus, the Son of God, is the true Messiah,* 6—9. *Shews the Satisfaction that the Believer has in his own Soul about him and eternal Life through him, and about God's hearing and answering the Prayers, that are offered up according to his Will, for ourselves and others,* 10—17. *And concludes with an Account of the happy Condition of true Believers beyond the rest of the World, and with a Charge to renounce all Idolatry,* 18—21.

TEXT.

1 *WHosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God: And every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.*

2 *By this we know that we love the Children of God, when we love God, and keep his Commandments.*

3 *For this is the Love of God, that we keep his Commandments: And his Commandments are not grievous.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. NOW, to close the Argument about brotherly Love, which has been so much insisted upon in this Epistle, ye ought seriously to consider, that whoever in his very Heart believes that Jesus is the true Messiah, and has accordingly an intire Dependence upon him, as the anointed Prophet, Priest and King of the Church, for all Salvation, is regenerated by the Spirit of God: And every one who, from this Principle of Faith, has a supreme Love to God, in his Esteem of him, Desire after him, and Delight in him, *who of his own Will begat us with the Word of Truth,* (Jam. i. 18) cannot but likewise bear a good Will to, and take Pleasure in his Christian-Brother, merely because he is beloved of God, and bears his Image, as one that is spiritually begotten of him.

2. It is a plain Token, by which we know that we love the Children of God, with a genuine Christian-Love, merely on account of their Relation and Likeness to him, when it proceeds from such a prevailing Love to God himself, as inclines and engages us sincerely to endeavour, by his Grace, to live in all holy Obedience to his Commandments, relating to this and every other Duty.

3. For this is the true and distinguishing Characteristic of an unfeigned and governing Love to God; and this is the Test, Proof and Evidence of its being so, and is its proper Tendency and Effect, that it determines us to *have an impartial Respect to all his Commandments:* (Pſ. cxix. 6.) And this sweetly constrains us to pay a conscientious Obedience to them, without picking and choosing, or counting any of

them (βαρειαι) a heavy Burden or grievous Task; but attending to them all, as comprehended in the great Law of Love, with Freedom and Delight. (See *Matth.* xi. 29, 30.)

4. For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the World: And this is the Victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith.

4. For whosoever is born again by the regenerating Operation of the Spirit of God, he himself, and (παν το γεγεννημενον) all that new Nature which is born or produced in him, gets above the Terrors and Allurements of the Men and Things of this World, and even triumphs over them; so as not to be disheartned or driven away by the one, or drawn aside by the other, from his Duty toward God: And the noble Conquest, which we, of this Character, obtain over every Thing of this World, that would obstruct, or interfere with our Love and Obedience to God, is not by any Power of our own, but by the Strength we derive from Christ, thro' Faith in him, whereby we trust in him and in God through him, and have realizing and assuring Views and Hopes of an incomparably higher Happiness in the World to come, than 'tis possible for us to lose in this. (*Heb.* x. 34, and xi. 1.)

5 Who is he that overcometh the World, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

5. Who is there of all Mankind, whether *Jew* or *Gentile*, that ever hath obtained such a Victory over this World, and is so far dead to every Thing in it, as not to be cool'd in his Affections toward God, nor alienated in Heart or Life from him, by any of its Frowns or Smiles? Where is the Man that has attained to this, but the Christian, who in his very Soul believes that Jesus is the true Messiah, and the only begotten Son of God, and depends upon him by a lively and effectual Faith as such, for Justification, Sanctification and complete Salvation?

6 This is he that came by Water and Blood, even Jesus Christ; not by Water only, but by Water and Blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth Witness, because the Spirit is Truth.

6. This true and only Messiah, even Jesus the anointed Saviour is he, who came into our World with a Commission from his heavenly Father to fulfil the Work of Redemption, which was divinely testified, not only by his coming with Water at his Baptism; (*Matth.* iii. 16) but also with Water and Blood at his Death, when the Writer of this Epistle particularly observed, that both Water and Blood came forth from his pierced Side; intimating, in a symbolical Way, the Purification, which was brought in by him from the Defilement and Guilt of Sin, according to what was typified by legal Washings with Water, and with the Blood of expiatory Sacrifices. (See the Note on *John* xix. 34, 35.) And his Character was afterwards attested by the Holy Spirit, in applying the Virtue of his Death to the Consciences of Believers for produceing both these Effects, as well as in glorifying Christ, by shewing his Things to them, and enabling his Servants to work innumerable Miracles in his Name; and we may depend upon the Witness which the Holy Spirit in this practical and effectual Manner bore to Christ, because he is, by way of Eminence, *the Spirit of Truth.* (John xiv. 17.)

7 For there are three that bear Record

7. For there are three divine Persons, the Habitation of whose Glory is in Heaven, that bear their united Testimony

in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: And these three are one.

to the incarnate Saviour from thence. The *first* is God the Father, who said of Christ at his Baptism and Transfiguration, (*Matth.* iii. 17, and xvii. 5) *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*; and (*Rom.* i. 4) *declared him to be the Son of God with Power, by the Resurrection from the Dead:* The *second* is the eternal uncreated Word himself, who ever was God with the Father; (see the Note on *John* i. 1) and said, *I and my Father are one*; (John x. 30) and often asserted his Office, as well as Divine-Character in the plainest Terms, and appealed for the Truth of it to the Miracles, which he wrought by his own Power, and particularly to his raising himself from the Dead: (*John* ii. 19.) The *third* of these heavenly Witnesses is the Holy Spirit, who gave abundant Attestations to our blessed Lord, as the only Saviour, by his visible Descent upon him at his Baptism, (*Luke* iii. 22) and by his coming from the exalted Messiah in Heaven to bear Witness to him, and to spread his Name, Kingdom and Glory in the World †. And these three heavenly Witnesses, though *personally* distinct in a Manner that infinitely transcends all our Ideas, are *essentially* one divine Being, one Thing, (ἕν εἰσι) or one God, in Distinction from, and in Opposition to all nominal or pretended Deities, which *by Nature are no Gods.* (Gal. iv. 8.)

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† It would be to little Purpose to trouble the common *English* Reader with the Disputes that Critics, especially of later Ages, have raised about *the Genuineness* of this Verse. The Learned may consult *Mill.* in loc, where the Doctor gives the fullest and fairest Account, I have any where met with, of the Pleas, that are urged from antient Copies, Versions and Quotations, on both Sides of the Question; from the whole of which he concludes, that the Arguments brought *for the Authority of this Text* appear to him to be so strong, that it ought by no Means to be drop'd. And several *rational Evidences* to support the Authenticness of it may be seen in Mr. *John Reynold*'s Continuation of Mr. *Henry*'s Exposition; where he makes most of the following Observations, with which I have intermix'd a few others. If we drop this Verse, and join the 8th to the 6th, it looks too like a Tautology, and the Beauty and Propriety of the Connection is lost, as may appear to any that attentively read the 6th and 8th Verses together, leaving out the 7th; and they don't give us near so noble an Introduction of the Witnesses, as our present Reading doth; nor make the visible Opposition to some Witness or Witnesses elsewhere, as is manifestly suggested in the Words, *And there are three that bear Witness in Earth*, ver. 8. But all stands in a natural and elegant Order, if we take in the 7th Verse, which is very agreeable, and almost peculiar, to the Stile and Sentiments of our Apostle, who, of all others, delights in these Titles, *the Father*, and *the Word*, and who is the only sacred Writer that records our Lord's Words, in which he speaks of *the Spirit's testifying of him*, and *glorifying him* by *receiving of his Things* and *shewing them to his Disciples*, and says, *I and my Father are one.* (John x. 30, and xv. 26, and xvi. 14.) *The Trinitarians* therefore had less Occasion to interpolate this Verse, than *the Antitrinitarians* had to take it out of the sacred Canon, if any, on either Side, can be supposed to be so very wicked, as to make such an Attempt; and it is much more likely that some Transcriber might, through the Similitude of the Beginning of the 7th and 8th Verses, or through some Obscurity in the Writing of that Part of his Copy, carelesly slip over the 7th, than that any should be so daring, as designedly to add it to the Text. And it can scarce be thought that the Apostle, in representing the Foundation of the Christian's Faith, and the various Testimonies that were given to Christ, should omit the supreme Testimony; and yet with a Reference to the before-recited Witnesses should add, *ver.* 9, *If we receive the Witness of Men, the Witness of God is greater*, though, according to the *Arian*-Sense of the 8th Verse, no immediate Witness of God had been mentioned before, if we leave out the 7th Verse. (See some of these and such like Thoughts more at large in Mr. *Reynolds*. See also Dr. *Hammond* on the Place.)

8. And

8 *And there are three that bear Witness in Earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood: And these three agree in one.*

8. And in concurring Testimony with these three divine Persons in Heaven, who subsist in the Unity of the Godhead, and have given their distinct Attestation to the saving Office of Christ, * there are three *practical* Witnesses to the same upon Earth. *One* of these lies in the miraculous Gifts and saving Graces of the Holy Spirit: *Another* is the spotless Purity of Christ's human Nature and Life, (*Heb.* vii. 26) and his holy Doctrine, by means of which the Souls of Believers are *sanctified*, and *cleansed*, as it were, *with clean Water*, (John xvii. 17, 1 Pet. i. 22, and *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25) as was signified, not only by *John*'s Baptism, which pointed to Christ for this Benefit; (*Matth.* iii. 11) but also by our Lord's own Institution of the standing Ordinance of Christian-Baptism in the Name of the sacred Three, which is a solemn and holy Dedication of the Baptised to the *Son*, together with the *Father* and the *Holy Ghost*: And the *third* of these Witnesses is *the Blood of the New Testament, which was shed for many for the Remission of Sins*, as represented in the Lord's Supper, (*Matth.* xxvi. 28) and applied to *purge the Consciences* of true Believers *from dead Works to serve the living God.* (Heb. ix. 14.) And these Three, though they be not *one in Nature* or Essence, nor are to be considered under *personal* Agency, as *the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost* are; yet they harmoniously agree, (εις το εν) unto the bearing of one and the same practical Testimony among themselves on Earth, and with the adorable *Three* in Heaven, as to Christ's being the divine, complete and only Saviour of Sinners.

9 *If we receive the Witness of Men, the Witness of God is greater: For this is the Witness of God, which he hath testified of his Son.*

9. Now if, according to what is written in the Law of God, we readily admit of, and depend upon the Testimony of two or three credible Witnesses among Men, (*Deut.* xvii. 6, and xix. 15, and *Matth.* xviii. 16) and they are judged sufficient to determine all Controversies about human Affairs in any Court of Judicature; We may be much more sure that the infallible Testimony of God the Father, Son and Spirit in Heaven, as well as of those three other Witnesses, by divine Appointment, on Earth, ought to be unquestionably and absolutely depended upon: For this is the Testimony of that God, who cannot lie, and who in these various Ways has given it concerning his only begotten and eternal Son, with regard to his being the true Messiah.

* The whole Context shews that the Witness here given to Christ relates most *immediately* to his Character as the great *Messiah*, or *incarnate Son of God*; and therefore he, as *the Word*, denoting his *divine Nature*, under which he is mentioned as a Witness to this Character, *ver.* 7, is as proper a Witness of it, as either the *Father* or the *Spirit*. And I take *the Spirit* in this Verse to relate, not to his *personal* Attestation to this Character of Christ, which he gave as one of the *Witnesses in Heaven*, v. 7; but to his *Gifts and Graces*, since *that which is born of the Spirit is* called *Spirit*. (John iii. 6.) And these witness to Christ *on Earth*, as they appear, and evidently operate in, and by the Subjects of them on Earth, in Confirmation of the Doctrine of the Gospel concerning him.

10 He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the Witness in himself: He that believeth not God, hath made him a Liar, because he believeth not the Record that God gave of his Son.

10. Whosoever, upon all this divine Evidence, cordially believes and trusts in the incarnate Son of God, as the only true and all-sufficient Saviour, he has, by the Light and Influence of the Spirit, embraced this Witness of God, and has an experimental and satisfying Testimony in his own Soul of the Suitableness, Worth and Excellency of Christ; of his Ability and Willingness to save him; and of his being authorised and every Way qualified to deliver him from the Guilt and Power of his Sins, and from all the Miseries they had entailed upon him, and to conduct him safe to heavenly Glory. On the contrary, whosoever, through Unbelief, rejects the Testimony of God concerning Christ and Salvation alone by him, he flatly contradicts the Truth of what God has said about him, and so, in Effect, gives the great and holy God the Lie; because he don't assent and consent to, and rely upon the plain and positive Testimony, (την μαρτυριαν) which he has given by his own Witnessing, in the Ways above-mentioned, to the mediatorial Character of his only begotten Son.

11 And this is the Record, that God hath given to us eternal Life: And this Life is in his Son.

11. And this is the Sum and Substance of the divine Testimony, *viz.* That God the Father, according to the eternal Counsel and good Pleasure of his Will, has, on Christ's Account, given to us who believe in him, (*ver.* 13) a Right and Title to, and Meetness for, together with the Beginnings, Earnests and Foretastes of eternal Life: And all the Felicity of this most excellent Life is purchased by, and treasured up and secured in his Son, who, as the Head of his Body, the Church, has all the Springs and Fulness of it in himself, to communicate to us in the Dispensations of Grace, which shall issue in all the Blessings of eternal Glory.

12 He that hath the Son, hath Life; and *he that hath not the Son of God, hath not Life.*

12. Hence it plainly follows, that he who is vitally united to, and so has a special Interest in the Son of God, as his Head and Redeemer, through Faith in him, is already spiritually alive, both in a legal and moral Sense, and has the Whole of everlasting Life in Title and sure Reversion: But he who, through Unbelief, rejects the Son of God, and so, according to the Gospel-Constitution, excludes himself from any peculiar Relation to, and Interest in him as a divine Saviour, continues still to be dead in Trespasses and Sins, and has no pleadable Right or Claim to the Blessings of eternal Life. (*John* iii. 36.)

13 These Things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal Life, and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God.

13. My Design in setting these divine Testimonies to Christ in so clear and strong a Light before you, who under a Sense of your helpless, guilty, lost and ruin'd State and Condition, as Sinners against God, heartily receive and depend upon his eternal Son as your only Saviour, is, that ye may be assured, for your Comfort, by the Witness of the Spirit with, and in your own Souls, according to the Word, that ye have all the Blessedness and Glory, included in the Notion of an immortal and heavenly Life, in Title

and

and Reversion; and have not only the Earnests of it in yourselves, but have the Whole of it in Christ your Head, who, as such, has taken Possession of it for you: And my further View herein is, that ye may be excited still more and more stedfastly, and with all humble and joyful Confidence and Perseverance to adhere to, and maintain a firm and intire Trust in, the Merit and Mediation of the only begotten Son of God.

14 *And this is the Confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his Will, he heareth us.*

14. And we, who really believe in him, are not only assured that he will bring us safe to Glory, but we have this further Satisfaction and holy Boldness (παῤῥησίαν) in our humble Addresses to the Throne of Grace through him, that even while we are in this World of Temptation, Sin and Sorrow, whatever we present our Petitions to God for, with Faith in Christ's Name, after such a Manner as is agreeable to his holy Will, according to the Notices he has given of it in the Declarations, Precepts and Promises of his Word, he mercifully attends to, and favourably regards the Voice of our Supplications. (*John* xvi. 23, 24, and *Jam.* i. 5, 6.)

15 *And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the Petitions that we desired of him.*

15. And if we are well satisfied that he graciously condescends, for Christ's Sake, to hearken to our sincere, believing, humble and fervent Prayers, we may certainly conclude from thence, that whatever we, for Matter and Manner, thus beg of him, as may be most for his Glory and our Good, he in his own Time and Way doth, or will grant the Requests, which we have put up to him in the Name of his Son.

16 *If any Man see his Brother sin a Sin* which is *not unto Death, he shall ask, and he shall give him Life for them that sin not unto Death. There is a Sin unto Death: I do not say, that he shall pray for it.*

16. Now, to add a Direction or two with regard to one's praying for another; If any Believer in Christ perceive, that his Brother in the Profession of the Gospel is guilty of any Sin, which though in its own Nature it be, as all Sin is, worthy of Death, and by the Sentence of God's Law has a just Entail of everlasting Destruction upon it, as its proper *Wages*, in Opposition to *eternal Life:* (Rom. vi. 23.) Yet if it be not the *Sin against the Holy Ghost*, which our blessed Lord has declared shall never be forgiven: (See the Note on *Matth.* xii. 31, 32.) Or, which amounts to much the same in those who once made a Profession of Christ, (See the Note on *ver.* 18.) if it be not a wilful and utter Apostacy from him, in which Case, *nothing remains but a certain looking for of Judgment and fiery Indignation, which shall devour such Adversaries*, (Heb. x. 26, 27.) If, I say, it be not an unpardonable Sin, * his Christian-Brother,

* It has been suggested, that *the Sin which* is, and *the Sin which is not unto Death*, relates to such Diseases of the Body, as were inflicted in a Way of Judgment for Sin, for the healing of which they, who had the Power of working Miracles, were to pray, or not, according as they should perceive, by an Impulse of the Spirit, that any Christian-Brother had, or had not sinned such a Sin. But as there don't appear to be any thing in the Context, that relates to *miraculous* Powers,

Brother, as bound in Duty and Love, ſhall beg of God to forgive it, in the Riches of his Grace through the Merit of his Son; and there is Ground to hope that, in anſwer to his Prayer of Faith, God will grant Repentance unto Life † to thoſe, that have not been guilty of the Sin, which irreverſibly binds one over to everlaſting Miſery. There is ſuch a ſort of unpardonable Sin, as will certainly iſſue in eternal Death: And whenever it plainly appears from Words and Behaviour, that any one has gone into that Sin, his Caſe is paſt Remedy; and I cannot encourage praying for the Forgiveneſs of it.

17 *All Unrighteouſneſs is Sin: and there is a Sin not unto Death.*

17. It muſt be owned indeed that all Iniquity, (αδικια) as it is contrary to what is right and juſt toward God, or Man, is a Deviation (αμαρτια) from the holy Law of God, and, as ſuch, in ſtrict Juſtice deſerves Death. But as, under the *Jewiſh* Diſpenſation, there were different Sorts and Degrees of Sin, ſome of which were puniſhed with Death without Mercy; (*Heb.* x. 28.) while others admitted of an Atonement; (See *Lev.* Chap. iv, v, and vi.) So, under the Goſpel-State, there is a ſort of ſinning, which is not aggravated, like *that* againſt the Holy Ghoſt, or *that* of utter Apoſtacy, ſo as to be out of the Reach of pardoning Grace, though a ſincere Believer may, through Temptation and Infirmity, like *David*, *Peter* and others, fall into heinous Sins: And therefore it is lawful and a Duty to pray, that he who has been guilty of only ſuch ſort of Sins may be forgiven for Chriſt's Sake, according to God's Promiſe in his Covenant to his People. (*Heb.* viii. 12.)

18 *We know that whoſoever is born of God ſinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himſelf, and that wicked one toucheth him not.*

18. We who have received Chriſt, as the only Saviour, are well aſſured both from the Word of God, and from the immortal Nature of true Grace in the Heart, and from the Indwelling of the Holy Ghoſt to keep it alive, that whoever is really regenerated by the Spirit of God, is never ſuffered to commit the unpardonable Sin; * nor doth he with full Conſent and Deliberation perſiſt in the Practice of any known Iniquity whatſoever; but he who is ſpiritually begotten of God, and ſo born again, has an utter

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Powers, or to the Cure of bodily Diſeaſes; and this is a Direction to Chriſtians *in common*, about praying one for another, all of which can't be ſuppoſed, even in the Apoſtles Days, to have had *the ſupernatural* Gift of healing, there ſeems to be no Foundation for that Thought.

† *He ſhall give him Life*, (δωσει αυτω ζωην) either refers to *God*, who, though not expreſſed, is *the Object* of the Prayer ſpoken of in the foregoing Words; Or elſe, taking it for a *Hebraiſm*, it may ſignify *Life ſhall be given him*, much in the ſame Manner, as in *Matth.* i. 23, *They ſhall call his Name Emmanuel* (καλεσουσι το ονομα αυτου ΕΜΜΑΝΟΥΗΛ) means, *His name ſhall be called* EMMANUEL.

* *Whoever is born of God ſinneth not* ſeems here to relate peculiarly to the *unpardonable Sin* againſt the Holy Ghoſt, or to the Sin of *total Apoſtacy*; one or other of which, as I take it, was ſpoken of *ver.* 16; and, perhaps, both may be reduced to the *Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, as in one View it was found in thoſe, who, under all the Light of the Goſpel-Revelation, never would own Chriſt, but always obſtinately ſet themſelves againſt him; and in another, was chargeable on thoſe, who had been enlightned and made a Profeſſion of Faith in him. And yet as the Apoſtle had before ſpoke of true Believers, as thoſe that *cannot Sin* deliberately, and with full Conſent and Approbation, (*Chap.* iii. 6, 9. See the Note there) that Senſe is alſo ſuggeſted in the Paraphraſe.

Deteſtation

Deteſtation of, and abiding Contrariety of Heart againſt ſuch Ways of Sinning; in ſo much that by Watchfulneſs and Prayer, and by Strength derived from Chriſt, he takes Care to keep himſelf from them; and Satan, that wicked Spirit, has no Power to influence him in ſuch a Manner, as to carry him into a determined Oppoſition to Chriſt, or Courſe of Sinning that ſhall end in utter Apoſtacy.

19 And *we know that we are of God, and the whole World lieth in Wickedneſs.*

19. And we are well ſatisfied that we are ſo born of God, as to be Partakers of a divine Natnre, which is a powerful and abiding Principle of all Holineſs; and that we are the Children of God, in a peculiar Relation to him, and ſide with him; and we know that all the reſt of Mankind, who are Stranges to this New Birth, and make up the greateſt Part of this World, continue voluntarily under the Power of Sin, and of the wicked One, (ὁ τῷ πονηρῷ, *ver.* 18.) and muſt be ranked under him as their Head and Prince, *who works in the Children of Diſobedience.* (Eph. ii. 2.)

20 *And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an Underſtanding, that we may know him that is true. And we are in him that is true,* even *in his Son Jeſus Chriſt. This is the true God and eternal Life.*

20. And, from all the undoubted Proofs before inſiſted on, we certainly know that Jeſus, the Son of God, has aſſumed human Nature, and actually come into this lower World, to *put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himſelf*; (Heb. ix. 26.) and we know by our own happy Experience, that he has not only given us an external Revelation in his Word, but has enlightned the Eyes of our Minds by an internal Operation of his Spirit, that we might have a ſaving Knowledge of him, who is Truth itſelf: And we are vitally united to him, who in all that he has ſaid is the true and faithful Witneſs, (*Rev.* i. 5) even Jeſus Chriſt the eternal Son of God. † This Jeſus, (οὗτος) in his original Nature, is the only living and true God together with the Father and Spirit; and our Faith in him, who has Life in himſelf, and is the Purchaſer and Giver of ſpiritual Life to us, will certainly iſſue in eternal Life. (*John* v. 26, and xvii. 3.)

21 *Little Children, keep yourſelves from Idols. Amen.*

21. Upon the whole then, my dear Children, whom I as affectionately love, as a Father doth his tender Babes, Let all theſe Conſiderations engage you to abſtain from every Appearance of Fellowſhip with Pagans in their idolatrous Worſhip of falſe Gods, from all Uſe of Images, as Repreſentations of the Deity, or as Mediums of Worſhip, and from every Idol of your own Hearts; and conſider Chriſt as the true God, (*ver.* 20) that ye may be ſecured againſt Idolatry in the Worſhip which ye pay to him. So may it be, to his and his Father's Honour, and to your own Comfort and Salvation! In Teſtimony of my Deſire and Hope of its being ſo, I heartily ſay, *Amen.*

† To clear up and eſtabliſh the Senſe of this Paſſage, as aſſerting that *Chriſt is the true God* here intended, See my Sermons on *Jeſus Chriſt God-Man*, Pag. 59, 60.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How divine, infallibly true, and most certainly, of all others, to be depended upon, are the numerous united Testimonies to our Lord Jesus Christ, as the great Messiah, who is the eternal Son of God, the same in Nature and Perfections with the Father, and has come into our World for the Redemption of lost Sinners! As the Father, Son and Spirit (who, though distinct Persons, are one divine Being) bore Witness to him from Heaven; so the Graces of the Spirit in the Believer's Heart, the purifying Effects of his Death in the Washing of Regeneration, and the Remission of Sins through Faith in his Blood, agree in their Testimony on Earth to him, as the only and all-sufficient Saviour: And he who, on the Credit of this complicated substantial Testimony, heartily believes and trusts in the Son of God for all Salvation, has an experimental and satisfying Witness in his own Soul, which sets to its Seal that God is true, and dares venture his eternal All upon it. But he who rejects this Testimony, through Unbelief, gives the Lie to the great God himself, the Sum of whose Testimony is, that he has given to Believers eternal Life; and this Life is safely treasured up for them in his Son. And O how great is their Happiness! They are born of God, and bear his Image as his Children, and obtain a noble Victory over this World by their Faith; they have eternal Life in and through Jesus Christ; and all their Prayers of Faith are heard and answered for Things agreeable to the Will of God. What rich Provision and Encouragement is here for Perseverance, with increasing Hope and Joy, in the lively Exercises of their Faith! Though there be still Remainders of Sin in them, they cannot deliberately and wilfully go into the Practice of any Iniquity; but are under the Government of that Love to God, which engages them sincerely to love his Children, because they are begotten of him after his own Likeness, and to take Pleasure in keeping all his Commandments. Every Transgression of the Law is by its Sentence, and in strict Justice, worthy of Death; but none of them is so great, as not to admit of Pardon through Faith in the Son of God, except the Sin against the Holy Ghost, which includes total Apostacy in those who once made a Profession of Christ, and is utterly inconsistent with true Faith in him; and so shall never be forgiven. But there is Room for Prayer, and Hope of Recovery, for any, that have not yet committed this Sin, which no true Believers can ever fall into: For they being born of God, and united to Christ, are under efficacious Influence to secure them against the Devil's ever being able to draw them into that unpardonable Sin. But all the unregenerate Part of the World remain under the Power of Sin and Satan, whom they, as Servants, willingly obey; and they must perish in, and for their Iniquities; unless, by divine Grace, they be turned from them, and brought to believe in Christ for the Remission of them. May we therefore, in solemn Reflections on all this, absolutely renounce every Kind of Idol, and worship the Lord our God, and him only; and never entertain a degrading Thought of Christ, who, together with the Father and Spirit, is the true God, and the Author of eternal Life! To whom be Glory now and for ever. *Amen.*

A PRAC-

A PRACTICAL

EXPOSITION

OF THE

Second Epiſtle of the Apoſtle *JOHN*.

In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The PREFACE to the Second Epiſtle of *JOHN*.

THE Matter and Stile, the Spirit of Love, and many Expreſſions in *this* and the *third* Epiſtle (which are thought to have been wrote ſoon after the *firſt*) being not only like, but the very ſame, with thoſe that appear in the *firſt* Epiſtle of the Apoſtle *John*, *Theſe*, as well as that, have been generally, and with good Reaſon, received as canonical Pieces of his Writings. (See the Preface to the firſt Epiſtle.)

This *ſecond* Epiſtle, as many judicious Expoſitors think, was wrote to ſome noted Perſon of Quality and eminent Chriſtian-Matron, whoſe proper Name was either *Electa* (ἐκλεκτή) which we render *elect*, or *Cyria*, (Κυρία) which is render'd *Lady*, and to her religious Children, as the *third* was perſonally to *Gaius*; while others ſuppoſe, that by the *elect Lady* is meant in a *figurative* Senſe, ſome new Teſtament-Church, as a collective Body, moſt probably at *Jeruſalem*, and by her *Children*, the particular Members of that Church; and that by the *elect Siſter* (ver. 13.) is meant the Church, where the Apoſtle reſided when he wrote this Epiſtle. But, whatever dubious Conjectures may lie on one, or the other Side of the Queſtion, it is difficult, and of very little Importance, for us to determine upon it, though I rather take it to be meant of ſome *particular Perſon*, and her Children, whether her Name were *Cyria* or *Electa*, or not; becauſe the Apoſtle ſpeaking in the ſingular Number ſays, (*ver.* 4, 5.) *I rejoiced greatly that I found of* THY *Children walking in the Truth. And I beſeech* THEE, *Lady, not as though I wrote a new Commandment to* THEE, *which* don't ſeem to be very properly underſtood of *a Church*; and ſpeaking of the *elect Siſter's Children* greeting her, (*ver.* 13.) he expreſſes it in the ſingular Number, ſaying *greet thee*. Accordingly the Paraphraſe keeps up the Air of a *perſonal* Addreſs to the elect Lady and her Children, which as it, like the reſt of the holy Scriptures, *was written for our Learning*, may be conſidered with an Application to any Church or Body of Chriſtians, and particular Perſons among them, ſo far as its Subject Matter and Terms agree to them, as the *third* Epiſtle to *Gaius* may, and as what God ſaid perſonally to *Joſhua* is applied in common to all true Believers, *Heb.* 13. 5. (See the Note there.)

In this short Letter the Apostle salutes the elect Lady and her Children, 1—3. Expresses his Joy in, and further excites, their Faith and Love, 4—6. Cautions them to be upon their Guard against Deceivers, whom he describes 7—9. Directs their Conduct toward them, 10, 11. *And concludes with excusing the Shortness of his Writing, by a Promise, God willing, to make them a Visit, and discourse more largely about Things, some of which he had touched upon; and with Salutations from the Children of her elect Sister;* 12, 13.

TEXT.

1 THE *Elder unto the elect Lady and her Children, whom I love in the Truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the Truth;*

2 *For the Truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever.*

3 *Grace be with you, Mercy,* and *Peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in Truth and Love.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. JOHN, who by a far advanced Age in Nature and Christianity, as well as by his apostolic Office, and *that* of long Standing, is the only surviving Apostle, and so emphatically the Elder of the Church of Christ, sends this Letter to the noble Matron, who is well known to be, not only a Person of high Birth and Figure in the World; but, which is most of all to her Honour, an excellent and eminently choice Christian, (See the Note on *Rom.* i. 1.) which carries an evident Token of God's having *from the Beginning chosen her to Salvation, through Sanctification of the Spirit, and Belief of the Truth;* (2 Thes. ii. 13.) and together with her, the Writer of this Epistle includes her amiable Children, who are Partakers of the same Faith with herself; all of whom, Mother and Children, I sincerely and affectionately love in Christ, who is *the Truth.* (John. xiv. 6.) and for the Sake of their having embraced him and the Truth of the Gospel: And not only I myself, but all those likewise that have heard of them, and especially that have the Honour of their Acquaintance, and are themselves enlightned with a spiritual and experimental Knowledge of Christ and of his true Doctrine, (*ver.* 9.) bear a high Esteem of them.

2. This our Affection is of a spiritual Nature merely, or chiefly at least, on Account of the Lord Jesus who is the Truth, and of their harmonious Agreement with us in *receiving the Word of Truth, with which God of his own Will has begotten us;* (Jam. i. 18.) and which, being *an incorruptible Seed,* abides as a true and living Principle of Faith and Holiness in us, and will remain, as such, in our Souls all our Days upon Earth, and then flourish up into eternal Life in Heaven.

3. In the Fulness of my Heart, and with humble Confidence that my Desire shall be answered, I earnestly beg for you, (ὑμῶν) Mother and Children, that all the Riches of free Love and Favour, all tender Compassion and pardoning Mercy, and all Manner of Peace in your own Souls, with God and one another, and with the whole Houshold of Faith, together with all Prosperity of every Kind, especially in your spiritual Concerns,

Concerns, may abound towards, and abide with you all, (μεθ' ὑμῶν) from God the Father, who in the Oeconomy of Salvation is to be considered, as the original Fountain of all Blessings; and from the anointed Lord and Saviour, who in his *divine Nature* is the eternal Son of the eternal Father, with the most eminent Propriety, and with the highest Delight, as he is *the Brightness of the Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person*, and is the dearest *Son of his Love*; (*Heb.* i. 3, and *Col.* i. 13) and who in his *Office-Capacity* is the only Mediator, Purchaser and Dispenser of all the Blessings, that come from the Father through him. All this I earnestly wish and hope in the Sincerity and Affection of my Heart for you, * that ye may be established in Truth and Love, and persevere in the Profession of them according to the Gospel.

4 *I rejoiced greatly, that I found of thy Children walking in Truth, as we have received a Commandment from the Father.*

4. In Testimony of the Sincerity of my Love and Desire for you, I can assure your Ladyship that my Soul was warmed with exceeding Joy, (ὅτι) because upon good Evidence I was well satisfied that, of the Children which God has graciously given you, there are some, at least, who have not only received Christ and the Truth of the Gospel, in the Notions of their Heads, but have received them with Faith and Love to influence their Hearts and Lives; † insomuch that wheresoever they go their Conversation is answerable thereunto, in Obedience to the holy Commandment, which we the Apostles of Christ have received from God the Father with a Commission to declare it.

5 *And now I beseech thee, Lady, not as though I wrote a new Commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the Beginning, that we love one another.*

5. And now, as the *End of the Commandment is Charity out of a pure Heart, and of a good Conscience, and of Faith unfeigned*, (1 Tim. i. 5.) One great Reason of my Writing is to intreat you, Dear Lady, to cultivate a holy Disposition, conformable to the Nature and Design of the great Law of Love; (*Matth.* xix. 19.) Not that I mean to write and recommend to you any new Commandment, as though I would impose any Thing, that you are not already acquainted with and obliged to obey; but what I speak of is only, for Substance, that summary comprehensive Commandment of the second Table of the moral Law, which was enjoined at the Beginning of the *Mosaic* Dispensation, and which our blessed Lord repeated and further explained, inculcated and enforced by evangelical Motives, at the Beginning of his Ministry, namely, That from a

* *In Truth and Love* may relate either to Christ's being *the Son of the Father*; or to the Apostle's wishing, that *Grace, Mercy and Peace might be with them*; or to *the End*, for which he desired this on their Behalf, as represented in the Paraphrase.

† It is probable that, on one Occasion or other, some of her Sons had travelled abroad, as the Word (περιπατοῦντας) may signify; and that the Apostle had met with them, and seen their excellent Spirit and Deportment to be as became the Gospel of Christ; and therefore spoke of them as Persons, whom he had *found walking in the Truth*.

Principle of Love to God we, as his Disciples, should bear a hearty Affection one towards another, in Imitation of his Love to us. (See the Note on *John* xiii. 34.)

6 And this is Love, that we walk after his Commandments. This is the Commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

6. And this is the Test, Proof and Evidence of a truly Christian-Love, and is its genuine Tendency and Effect, that it engages us to have a conscientious, cheerful and universal Respect to all God's Commandments. (1 *John* v. 3.) But the Law of Love, as springing from Faith in Christ, (1 *John* iii. 22, 23.) and influential to all holy Obedience, is the Commandment, which I have principally in my Eye, that, according to what ye have heard of it in the preaching of the Word, ever since ye were first acquainted with Christianity, ye should carefully continue to put it into Practice, suitable to the Design of the Gospel.

7 For many Deceivers are entered into the World, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh. This is a Deceiver and an Antichrist.

7. For many false Teachers are gone abroad in the World, on Purpose to seduce Christians from the Way of Evangelical Faith, Love and Obedience, and to sap the Foundation of them all by their pernicious Errors, who are so far from believing and acknowledging, that they flatly deny our Jesus to be the only true Messiah, who has actually appeared in Human Nature to fulfill the Work of Redemption; (See the Note on 1 *John* iv. 2.) or deny his having had a real Body of Flesh, but affirm that he lived and died in Appearance only. Whoever espouses and broaches such heretical Notions, he is one of those Deluders of the People, and direct Opposers of the Person, Doctrine and Glory of Christ, and of the Whole of his saving Office, which he foretold would arise; (*Matth.* xxiv. 11.) and of which I have given Warning. (1 *John* ii. 18.)

8 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those Things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full Reward.

8. Beware therefore of them; Look about you; Stand, Mother and Children, upon your Guard; and take heed that your own Faith and Practice be not corrupted by them; that so neither ye yourselves, * nor we, the Servants of Christ may lose the good Fruit of our Ministry, which was instrumental in gaining you over to Christ, not only in Profession, but, as we trust, in Sincerity and Truth. But whatever all the Attempts of Deceivers to pervert you, *Hold that fast which ye have, that no Man take your Crown*, (Rev. iii. 11.) and that we, together with you, may reap the Whole of the blessed Reward, answerable to the utmost of our Hopes and Desires, which God, for Christ's Sake, has graciously promised to his faithful Servants *that turn many to Righteousness*, (Dan. xii. 3.) and to all *them that love him*. (Jam. i. 12.)

9 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth

9. Let Men's Pretences be what they will, Every one who allowedly transgresses the Law of God, and particularly *that* of

* The *Alexandrian*, *Stephanus's*, and other Copies of good Repute, read *ye*, instead of *we lose*, *we have wrought*, and *we receive!* (Vid. Mill. in loc.) The Paraphrase therefore is made with an Accommodation to both Senses, in a just Consistency, one with the other. But I rather prefer the *common Reading*, as most agreeable to a like Passage of this Apostle in 1 *John* ii. 28.

Love;

not in the Doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the Doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

Love; (*v.* 5, 6.) and don't continue to hold and profess the pure Doctrine of Christ, as the true Messiah, (1 *John* ii. 22—24.) He has not the Spirit of God dwelling in him; nor has he any Claim to an Interest in God, or in his Favour and Love. He, on the contrary, who continues to believe and profess, and to practise according to the Doctrine of Christ, and concerning him, is a true Believer, in spiritual and holy Union and Communion both with the eternal Father and his eternal Son: (1 *John* i. 3, and ii. 24.) The Spirit of the Father and Son dwells in him; (1 *John* iv. 2.) and he has a sure Interest in their Favour and Love.

10 *If there come any unto you, and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not into* your *House, neither bid him God Speed.*

10. If there be any one that comes to you with Pretences of preaching the Gospel, and doth not bring the forementioned Doctrine of Christ in his Ministrations, but advances Principles subversive of it, Give him no hospitable Entertainment, more than the common Laws of Humanity require, as though he were welcome to your House; no, nor so much as admit him into your Doors to vent his Errors in your Family, and endanger the corrupting of them from the Simplicity that is in Christ; † nor have any such familiar Conversation with him, as looks like wishing that God would prosper him in his pernicious Designs.

11 *For he that biddeth him God Speed, is Partaker of his evil Deeds.*

11. For whoever shews him any Countenance and speaks him fair, like one that wishes him Success in the abominable Principles and Practices, which he would propagate, is accessory to, and by just Construction a Partner with him in his wicked Works, and contracts the Guilt of helping him forward therein, and of encouraging others to fall in with him.

12 *Having many Things to write unto you, I would not* write *with Paper and Ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our Joy may be full.*

12. There are many Things of this and the like Nature, that I could write to you, which I don't think proper to do at present, by further setting Pen and Ink to Paper; but I live in Hope that, by the Will of God, I may ere long have an Opportunity of making you a Visit, and personally conversing with you all, that we may have mutual Pleasure, and an intire Satisfaction, in freely talking them over by Word of Mouth.

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† To *bid one God speed* (χαίρειν) was a friendly Salutation among the Antients; and the forbidding this to be used to such, as propagate fundamental Errors, contrary to the Doctrine of Christ, is generally thought to allude to the *Jews* forbidding to have any familiar Correspondence with excommunicated Persons, who were to be treated like *Heathen-Men and Publicans*, as our Lord also directed the Proceedings of his Church (*Matth.* xviii. 17.) against obstinate Offenders, with whom the Apostle *Paul* says they were not to eat. (1 *Cor.* v. 9, 11. See the Note there.) And the Story is well known, which *Eusebius* relates from *Irenæus* in his ecclesiastical History, (Lib. 4. cap. 14.) where he says " The Apostle *John* going into the Bath at *Ephesus* to wash himself, and seeing *Cerinthus* there, (a no-" torious Heretic) leaped out of the Bath unwash'd, saying *that he feared lest the Bath should fall* " *down, when* Cerinthus, *the Enemy of Truth, was in it:* And *Polycarp* (one of *John's* Disciples) meet-" ing at a certain Time with *Marcion*, who said to him, *Acknowledge me*; he answered, *I know thee to* " *be the First-born of Satan.*" So greatly were the Apostles and their Disciples afraid of countenancing and freely conversing with any, that had grosly adulterated the Truth, even as *Paul* says, *A Heretic after the first and second Admonition, reject.* (Tit. iii. 10.)

13. The

13 *The Children of thy elect Sister greet thee. Amen.*

13. The pious Children of your Sister after the Flesh, and in a spiritual Sense your Choice, excellent, and I trust your Sister chosen in Christ, send their most dutiful and affectionate Respects to you. § May there be many such Ornaments to the Christian-Religion among Ladies of Distinction and their Offspring! *Amen.*

RECOLLECTIONS.

How rare, but O how lovely is it for Persons of Quality and their Children to embrace the pure uncorrupted Doctrine of Christ with Faith and Love, and to walk answerable to it. All faithful Ministers and Friends to the Truth of the Gospel greatly rejoice where-ever they find it, and most sincerely wish them the best of Blessings from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ, his dear and only begotten Son.—Christian-Religion makes no Abatement of civil Respect to Persons of high Rank and near akin; but gives a spiritual Turn to the most dutiful and affectionate Salutations of them.—How important is it for professing Believers to stand fast and persevere in the Faith of Christ, as the incarnate and atoning Saviour, and in the most cordial Love to him, and to one another for his Sake, according to the Commandment of God, inclusive of a conscientious Respect to every other Precept! These, and these only, have the Benefit of a special Relation to, and Interest in God the Father, and his eternal Son. But, in order to their evident and comfortable Continuance herein, How highly doth it concern them, that they be not deceived by false Teachers, and infected with Antichristian Errors, lest they themselves, as well as those that were instrumental to their Conversion, should be disappointed of the ample Satisfaction, they hoped for in the happy Effects of the Gospel upon them! And how cautious should they be of giving any Encouragement or Countenance to Seducers, that would subvert the fundamental Articles of Faith, relating to the Person and Offices, Doctrine and Glory of Christ! They who bid them God speed are accessary to all the Mischief that is done by their destructive Errors.—But these Things may be better talk'd over in a free Conversation with private Christians, more at large, than can well be wrote in a short Letter. May all Professors of Christ be preserved, by divine Grace, from every Delusion! *Amen.*

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§ Probably the Sister herself was absent, if not dead, when the Apostle wrote this Epistle; and therefore he sent only the Salutation of her Children at their Request.

A PRAC-

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF THE Third EPISTLE of the APOSTLE *JOHN*.

In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The PREFACE to the Third Epistle of *JOHN*.

IT is needless to add much to what has been said in the Prefaces to the two former Epistles of *John*. *Gaius*, to whom this was wrote, is most generally thought to have been that *Gaius*, whom the Apostle *Paul* called *his Host*, Rom. xvi. 23. (See the Note there) But as various Persons bore that Name, it is hard to determine, who this *Gaius* was.

The Apostle congratulates Gaius *upon his eminent Piety and Hospitality*, 1—8. *Cautions him against siding with* Diotrephes, *who was a Minister of a haughty and turbulent Spirit*, 9—11. *But recommends* Demetrius *as a Man of an excellent Character*, 12. *Excuses the Brevity of this Letter by the Hope he had of soon seeing* Gaius, *and concludes with Salutations*, 13, 14.

TEXT.

1 *THE elder unto the well-beloved Gaius, whom I love in the Truth.*

2 *Beloved, I wish above all Things that thou mayest prosper*

PARAPHRASE.

1. JOHN the Apostle who, on account of his great Age and high Office, may with double Propriety, and peculiar Emphasis, be stiled *the Elder*, sends these few Lines to the dearly beloved *Gaius*, for whom I, who call myself *the Elder*, have the most sincere Affection, on account of his Attachment to the Truth of the Gospel.

2. So eminent are your Light, Grace and Holiness, and so evident the Fruits of them, my dear Christian-Friend, that when I consider the Weakness and Infirmity of your bodily State

and be in Health, even as thy Soul prospereth.

State of Health, * and the many Difficulties that obstruct your being so vigorously and extensively useful, as your pious and generous Temper disposes and qualifies you for, I have nothing so much at Heart relating to you, as to desire and beg of God, that all your Affairs of Life, and animal Nature, may hold equal Pace with your judicious and thriving Soul in all its spiritual Concerns.

3 *For I rejoiced greatly when the Brethren came and testified of the Truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the Truth.*

3. For I exceedingly rejoiced, when those Christian-Brethren, that came from you, gave an Account of the Sincerity of your Faith, by Means of which the Word of Truth, the Gospel of Salvation has taken Possession of your Heart, as evidently appears by your steadily persevering to walk in Christ, and in the Way of Truth and Holiness, through the whole Course of your Life and Conversation, in these perilous Days of Persecution, Defection and Error.

4 *I have no greater Joy than to hear that my Children walk in the Truth.*

4. Nothing can afford me a greater Satisfaction and Delight, than to hear, as I do of you and others, (2 *Epist.* ver. 4.) that those Converts, whom I think of with as much Tenderness, Care and Affection, † as if they were my own Children according to the Flesh, hold fast the Truth of the Gospel in its Purity, and live in all holy Conversation and Godliness answerable to it.

5 *Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the Brethren, and to Strangers;*

5. It is an unspeakable Pleasure to me, my dear *Gaius*, when I hear and reflect upon it, that you act with an Integrity becoming your lovely Character, and with Faithfulness to your Obligations, Talents, and Conscience, as a Christian, in all compassionate and generous Assistances to the ministring Servants of Christ, and private Brethren of your Church and Acquaintance, that need your Liberality; and to religious Strangers that are driven from Place to Place by the Violence of Persecutions, or voluntarily go abroad to preach the Gospel, and are well recommended to you.

6 *Which have borne Witness of thy Charity before the Church: Whom if thou bring forward on their Journey, after a godly*

6. Some of these, who have been refreshed by your Bounty, have publicly bore an honourable Testimony to your Benevolence and Hospitality in the Presence of the Church, where I now reside; (See the Preface to the first Epistle) And as they are about to return to you, and then proceed to some other Places for further spreading the Gospel among the

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* It is probable that *Gaius* was of a sickly Constitution, and met with Losses, or Entanglements in secular Affairs, through Persecutions for the Sake of Christ, which were a Restraint upon some more eminent Degrees of public Service, that he might otherwise have gone into. This therefore was the best Wish that the Apostle could make for *Gaius*. But to wish that Prosperity of Soul may be the Measure of Prosperity in Health and worldly Affairs to the greatest Part of Mankind, would be to imprecate a Curse, instead of desiring a Blessing upon them.

† *Gaius* (if it was he whom the Apostle *Paul* called *his Host* while he was at *Corinth*, Rom. xvi. 23.) seems to have been converted by that Apostle, who baptized him, 1 *Cor.* i. 14; and spoke of himself as the spiritual Father that had begotten the *Corinthians* by the Gospel, and espoused them to Christ, 1 *Cor.* iv. 15, and 2 *Cor.* xi. 2; And therefore when our Apostle speaks of *Gaius* and other Believers as *his Children*, it may be considered as the tender Stile of paternal Love and Affection toward them, whoever were the Instruments of their Conversion; and his using this Appellation, when writing under the Character of *the Elder*, has its peculiar Beauty.

Gen-

Sort, thou shalt do well.

Gentiles; if, according to your wonted Kindness, you will be so good as to do what in you lies to give them all needful Assistances for their Journey, in a Manner suitable to your own Christian-Temper, and to their Relation to, and Employment for God, you will act (καλως) a worthy Part toward them, in Imitation of his Goodness.

7 *Because that for his Name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles.*

7. For in their Love and Obedience to our blessed Lord, and Zeal for his Glory, they, though of the *Jewish* Nation, cheerfully went abroad with a Commission to preach the Gospel to the *Gentiles*; and, that they might do it without prejudicing the *Gentiles* against them, as though they were mercenary in their Designs, they waved their Right of claiming a Maintenance from them; (See the Paraphrase and Notes on 1 *Cor.* ix. 4—14.) and gave their Labours freely, casting themselves on the Providence of God for a Subsistence, without asking or receiving any Thing towards it from the *Gentile*-Converts.

8 *We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be Fellow-helpers to the Truth.*

8. It therefore certainly is our Duty, who wish well to the Cause of Christ and to immortal Souls, to take such generous, and disinterested, and needy Ministers into our affectionate Care and kind Regards; and to be helpful to them according to our Ability, that we may have the Pleasure and the Honour of bearing a Part with them in the Success of their Ministrations, by contributing to their Maintenance; and so may work together with them in propagating the Truth of the Gospel among *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*.

9 *I wrote unto the Church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the Pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not.*

9. I would have wrote a Letter * to recommend these worthy Brethren to the Church, of which you, my dear *Gaius*, are a Member, to encourage and assist them in their important Service: But *Diotrephes*, as I am well informed, behaves at such an imperious and haughty Rate, and is so very ambitious of bearing an absolute Sway, and of carrying every Thing among them in an arbitrary Manner, just according to his own Mind and Humour, that whatever I say, even by apostolic Authority, stands for nothing with him, but is treated with Disdain, as far as it thwarts his Pride, Prejudices and selfish Designs. I therefore chose rather to write to you about this Affair, than to them, or him, who so tyrannically lords it over them, and so con-

* Several *Critics* have observed that according to the *indefinite* Latitude of the *Aorist* (εγραψα) *I wrote* may be rendered *I would have wrote*, or *was about to have wrote* to the Church, referring, not to any *former* Letter, but to what the Apostle would have wrote, had it not been for the malignant lordly Temper and Influence of *Diotrephes* among them, probably the Church at *Corinth*, of which *Gaius* appears to have been a Member, if it is the same that is spoken of, *Rom.* xvi. 23. (See the Note there.) And then what the Apostle adds about *Diotrephes*, gives a very good and obvious Reason, why he wrote to *Gaius* about *receiving the Brethren*, rather than to *the Church*, or to *Diotrephes*, who seems to have been a furious judaizing Christian, and an imperious overbearing and leading Man, if not Pastor of the Church, that had assumed to himself such an exorbitant Power over it, as would have enabled him, either to suppress the Letter, or to defeat its Design, by forbidding the Church to comply with it, and casting them out that would, nevertheless, shew Kindness to the travelling Preachers to the *Gentiles*, whom it recommended.

temptously

temptuously rejects both me and the Brethren, that are for propagating the pure Gospel of Christ among the *Gentiles.* (ver. 5.—8.)

10 *Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his Deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious Words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the Brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth* them *out of the Church.*

10. This is so unsufferably domineering and insolent, and so injurious to the apostolic Character, to the Truth itself, and to the common Rights and Privileges of the Church, that, for this Reason, whenever I may have an Opportunity of making them a Visit, I will severely animadvert upon, and publicly expose and reprove him before the whole Church for the Evil of his Doings, who gives himself a scandalous Liberty to talk saucily and impertinently, with wicked and malicious Reproaches of me and the Brethren recommended by me, as though we were beneath Notice and Regard: And, not being satisfied with this, he not only himself refuses to shew any Kindness to the Brethren, that have exposed themselves to Wants and Hardships in preaching the Gospel to the *Gentiles*; but by his arbitrary Way of proceeding hinders those from countenancing and assisting them, that are well inclined to it; and is so violent against them, that if they either will not, or in Conscience dare not comply with his unreasonable Impositions, he by his own usurp'd Authority excommunicates them from any further Relation to, or Communion with the Church.

11 *Beloved, follow not that which is Evil, but that which is Good. He that doeth Good is of God: but he that doeth Evil hath not seen God.*

11. My dearly beloved *Gaius*, Take heed of being intimidated by his haughty and tyrannical Management, much more of being influenced to an Imitation of his wicked Temper and Ways, or of any sinful Practice whatever; but copy after † every Thing that is excellent in a good Man, wheresoever you see it. He who is a *Doer of Good*, (ὁ ἀγαθοποιῶν) and *that* particularly in a Way of Benevolence to the Servants of Christ for his Sake, is born of God, bears his Likeness, lives under the Influence of his Spirit, is approved of him, and has Communion with him: But whosoever he be that is *a Worker of Iniquity* (ὁ κακοποιῶν) like *Diotrephes*; and *that* particularly in haughty Insolence, and in cruel and malicious Opposition to the faithful Servants of Christ, is a Stranger to the true Knowledge of God and Communion with him, who *is Love* (1 *John* iii. 6, 10, and iv. 3.)

12 *Demetrius hath good Report of all Men, and of the*

12. There is one among you, a Man of a more excellent Spirit than *Diotrephes*; such an one I would recommend to your Imitation; and that is the noted *Demetrius*, * who

† *Diotrephes* having been spoken of as a *wicked Man* just before, *ver.* 9, 10. and *Demetrius* being recommended as a *good Man* immediately after, *ver.* 12, it is natural to suppose that the Apostle had his Eye upon both these *Persons*, as well as their *Ways*, in his Exhortation to *follow not that which is Evil, but that which is Good.*

* What *Demetrius* this was, or whether he were a Minister, or private Member, or Officer of the Church, is unknown to us; though it was well known, and he was honourably spoken of, in those Days: And, by the Apostle's Character of him, he appears to have been an exemplary Christian, particularly for Hospitality; and on *that*, as well as on other Accounts, a Pattern of good Works worthy of Imitation.

Truth itself: yea, and we also bear Record; and ye know that our Record is true.

is a Christian of a most amiable Character, particularly for Beneficence and Charity, among all his Acquaintance, whether Professors or not; as appears from many Instances of his Goodness, and as must be acknowledged, to the Credit of the Gospel, by every one that would speak the Truth concerning him: Yea, and we, the Apostles and Ministers of Christ, cannot but bear an honourable Testimony to him, from what we have seen or heard of him as an exemplary and public spirited Christian; and those of you who are sincere Members of the Church (οἴδατε) well know that our Testimony (μαρτυρία) which is never given upon slight Evidence, may be fully depended upon as faithful and true.

13 *I had many things to write, but I will not with Ink and and Pen write unto thee:*

13. Many other Things were in my Mind to write to you, relating to these and such like Points: But, upon further Thoughts, I judge it may be more prudent not to commit them by Pen and Ink to Paper in this Epistle to you.

14 *But I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak Face to Face. Peace be to thee. Our Friends salute thee. Greet the Friends by Name.*

14. But I hope, by the Will of God, ere long to make you a Visit; (*ver.* 10.) and then we shall have an Opportunity for personal Conversation together by Word of Mouth, in which we may freely talk over these Things at large. In the mean while, I heartily wish and pray, that all Prosperity of every Kind, relating to Soul and Body, may attend you. Our Christian-Friends in my Neighbourhood send their most affectionate Respects to you. Be pleased to make *mine* acceptable to all the orderly Members of the Church, and cordial Lovers of Christ and Truth, and Friends to me and his ministring Servants, in your Parts, as though I particularly mentioned them by Name.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How desirable, but, alas! How few are the Instances of such Prosperity of Soul in spiritual Concerns, as one would wish to be the Measure of a proportional State, of bodily Health and Success in temporal Affairs! Such Christians as abound in Faith, and Charity toward their pious Acquaintance and Strangers, and give substantial Proofs of it in their Lives, are exceeding lovely and greatly beloved, rejoiced in, caress'd, and honourably spoken of as worthy of Imitation, by all true Friends to the Gospel of Christ, and especially by his ministring Servants. But how should proud, insolent Imposers upon Churches, and malicious Revilers of the uncorrupted Gospel and its faithful Preachers, be detested, exposed and censured, as open Enemies to it and them, and as injurious and domineering Lords over God's Heritage, who will neither do Good themselves, nor suffer others to do it that would! They are Strangers to the true Knowledge of God: But all who, from Principles of Faith and Love, seek and do the Things that please him, are his Children, and ought, for his Sake, to assist ministring Servants in their Lord's Work, that they may bear a Part with them in propagating evangelical Truth and the Good of precious Souls. To write such Things as these to Christian-Friends, as Occasions offer, is very useful; But how much more delightful and advantageous is it, to converse freely together about them! May all religious Affection be ever preserved among true Believers, and mutual sincere Wishes of every Kind of Happiness, both temporal and spiritual, be cultivated between them, with cordial Friendship one towards another! *Amen.*

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF THE General Epiſtle of the Apoſtle *JUDE*.

In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The PREFACE to the Epiſtle of *JUDE*.

THE Apoſtle *Jude*, the Author of this Epiſtle, ſtiles himſelf the Brother of *James*, (ver. 1) and was called the Son of *Alpheus* and *Mary*, and own Brother to *James* the leſs, (*Luke* vi. 16, and *Mark* xv. 40) to diſtinguiſh him from *Judas Iſcariot*, who infamouſly betray'd his Lord; accordingly our Apoſtle is called *Judas*, not *Iſcariot*. (John xiv. 22.)

His principal Deſign in writing this Epiſtle was to caution and fortify the *Jewiſh* Converts, perhaps, (as Dr. *Lightfoot* thinks) thoſe eſpecially of *Judea*, againſt being drawn into Apoſtacy by means of the falſe Teachers that had aroſe, and were very buſy among them, to ſubvert the Foundation of Chriſtianity. And as the Argument of *this* is much the ſame with, eſpecially *the ſecond Chapter* of, the the ſecond Epiſtle of *Peter*, it is generally thought to have been wrote about the ſame Time, three or four Years before the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*: and great Aſſiſtance may be gathered for underſtanding one of them by comparing it with the other.

The Apoſtle ſalutes the Chriſtians to whom he wrote, and exhorts them to ſtand faſt in the Faith againſt thoſe Jewiſh *Zealots that would undermine it*, 1—4. *Shews the Danger of being infected by them, and the dreadful Puniſhment which ſhall be inflicted on them and their Followers, as exemplified in the unbelieving*

believing Israelites, *in the fallen Angels, and in* Sodom *and* Gomorrha, 5—7. *Gives a hideous Description of these Seducers and their deplorable End,* 8—16. *Cautions Believers against being surprized at such Deceivers arising among them, as being forewarn'd, that they might be fore-arm'd against them, and maintain their own Stedfastness by Faith and Prayer, and a prudent Care one of another,* 17—23. *And concludes with a lofty and encouraging Doxology,* 24, 25.

TEXT.	*PARAPHRASE.*
1 JUDE *the Servant of Jesus Christ, and Brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ,* and *called:*	1. JUDAS, not *Iscariot*, but a faithful Servant of Jesus Christ, sent forth by his immediate Commission to preach the Gospel, even that *Judas*, who by natural Birth was Brother to *James* the less, sends greeting to all Believers of the Circumcision, who may be considered, in the Judgment of Charity, as those that were set apart by God the Father for himself in his eternal Purposes of Love and Grace, as his Elect *; and in Consequence thereof have been secured in Jesus Christ, their Covenant-Head, and preserved by his all-governing Providence from being cut off by Death in their unconverted State; and, in due Time, were effectually called to the Knowledge of him, and to a Participation of all the Privileges and Blessings of the Gospel here, and of his gloriousKingdom hereafter. (1 *Thess.* ii. 12.)
2 *Mercy unto you, and Peace, and Love be multiplied.*	2. May the tenderest Compassion of the Father of Mercies toward the Miserable and Unworthy; and Peace with him and one another, and in your own Consciences, together with the best of all Prosperity of every Kind; and all the excellent Fruits of his special and distinguishing Love, with the richest Manifestations of it, increase abundantly, in their utmost Fulness, towards all and every one of you, unto the begetting of the most fervent Love to him and one another.
3 *Beloved, when I gave all Diligence to*	3. My dearly beloved in the Lord, When I was studiously thoughtful about, and earnestly applied to the Work

* As *sanctified*, and *preserved* are mentioned before *called*, they seem to relate, not so immediately to *internal Holiness*, and *Preservation in the Faith*, which are after *calling*, as to *Separation to God*, as the Word *sanctified* signifies; (See the Notes on *John* x. 36, and xvii. 17) and to a [illegible] and *providential* Preservation in Christ before, and in order to these Persons being called. Or if, with *Beza*, *Pareus*, and Dr *Whitby*, we admit of a *Transposition* of the Sentence, then the Order and Construction will stand thus, (τοις κλητοις εν Θεω πατρι ηγιασμενοις και Ιησου Χριστω τετηρημενοις) *To the Called that have been sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in,* or *by Jesus Christ.* And this still points our Thoughts the same Way, as it speaks of their *having been sanctified*, and *preserved*, antecedent to their being *called:* And so *sanctified by God the Father* here answers to *Elect, according to the Foreknowledge of God the Father*, and not to *the Sanctification of the Spirit* in 1 *Pet.* i. 2. And the *Alexandrian*, *Stephanus*'s and some other Copies, and the *Syriac*, *Ethiopic*, and other antient Versions, (Vid. *Mill.* in loc.) instead of *sanctified*, read *beloved* (ηγαπημενοις) by God the Father. But, which ever Way we take it, the *Sanctification and Preservation* of the *Called* are ascribed, not to themselves, but to the gracious Acts of God the Father, and of Jesus Christ.

write unto you of the common Salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the Faith which was once delivered unto the Saints.

of sending an Epistle to you, concerning that spiritual and eternal Salvation, which is common to you, and me, and all true Believers, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, and is proposed, and recommended in the Gospel, to the Acceptance of all Sorts of Sinners, to whom it is preached with this Assurance, that *whoever comes to Christ, he will in no wise cast him out.* (John vi. 37.) This is a Point of such vast Importance, and so vehemently struck at in this Day of sad Defection, and of intriguing, as well as violent Methods to overthrow it, that I thought it necessary, under divine Suggestion, to write to you about it, and stir you up by every Consideration relating to your own Safety and Comfort, and to the Glory of Christ and of God in him, to exert yourselves, in an humble Dependence on divine Grace, with the utmost Vigour, even, as it were, to an Agony of Labour, Strife and Concern, (ἐπαγωνίζεσθαι) in maintaining, defending and practising the pure and uncorrupted Doctrine of Faith in its full Extent, with respect to the Person, Offices, Righteousness, Grace and Government of the Lord Christ, which was once for all perfected, and was delivered by him to his holy Apostles, and by them to the Church, consisting of Believers that are holy in Heart and Life; and which was committed as a Trust and Treasure to them, that they might keep it faithfully, and transmit it to Posterity, and not suffer it to be altered, or wrested out of their Hands, by any Means whatsoever. I say there is great Need that I should write to you about this.

4 *For there are certain Men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this Condemnation, ungodly Men, turning the Grace of our God into Lasciviousness, and denying the only*

4. For there are certain impious and heretical Men, who have clandestinely introduced themselves, by Craft and Flattery, among you, unawares indeed to you, but not to God; they being Men, who were written of in antient Prophecies,† according to the still more antient Records of the divine Mind, as a Set of ungodly Men, that shall be brought to the awful Judgment and righteous Punishment, due to them for their Iniquities; who, under Pretences of having embraced Christianity, pervert the Doctrine of the

† *Who were before of old ordained to this Condemnation* manifestly relates, not to their having been before ordained to their *Sin*, but to their being awfully *judged and condemned* for it. In this View it appears to me to be of little Moment, whether *before of old ordained* refers to what was *antiently written* in Prophecies, if any such can be found, besides that of *Enoch*, which is not *written* in the Old Testament, nor, as far as I know, *written at all*; or to what was, as it were, written in the eternal Counsels of God, in which he determined to punish them, not as Creatures simply considered, but as *Sinners*: For whatever has been *before written* in divine Predictions concerning them, it was only a Transcript of what God had *before determined* to inflict upon them, according to the due Desert of their Iniquities, which he foresaw they, through the Perverseness of their own Hearts, would voluntarily and maliciously involve themselves in. And I cannot conceive, why there should be any Thing more harsh in the Thought of God's having *before appointed*, than of his having *foretold* the righteous Procedure, whereby he will take Vengeance upon them for their heinous Provocations; and therefore *both* are suggested in the Paraphrase.

Lord God, and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Grace of God unto the indulging of wanton and laſcivious Practices; and who, either to countenance themſelves therein,* or to throw Slander upon the Principles and Profeſſion of ſincere Believers, put a corrupt and reproachful Conſtruction upon this Goſpel of free Grace, as tho' it were calculated to encourage diſſolute Manners; and, by their wicked Courſes, they practically deny the Wiſdom, Holineſs and Authority of God in his moral Precepts delivered under the Old Teſtament, even of that God, who, to the Excluſion of all that are not by Nature God, is the only living and true God: (See the Notes on *John* xvii. 3, and 2 *Pet.* ii. 1.) And at the ſame Time they reject the true Goſpel-Doctrine concerning the divine Perſon and Offices of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as the Prophet, Prieſt and King of the Church; whoſe Goſpel, as a Prophet, is *the Doctrine according to Godlineſs*; (1 Tim. vi. 3) *who gave himſelf for us*, as a Prieſt, *that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himſelf a peculiar People, zealous of good Works*; (Tit. ii. 14) and *the Sceptre of whoſe Kingdom*, as a King, *is a Sceptre of Righteouſneſs.* (Heb. i. 8.)

5 *I will therefore put you in Remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having ſaved the People out of the Land of Egypt, afterward deſtroyed them that believed not.*

5. To deter you therefore from giving heed to theſe Seducers, I would remind you, tho' ye, as converſant with the Old Teſtament, have already known, and been fully aſſured, that the Jehovah of *Iſrael*, having with an outſtretched Arm delivered his profeſſing People out of their extreme Bondage and Oppreſſions in the Land of *Egypt*, did nevertheleſs afterward cut off Multitudes of them in the Wilderneſs, by terrible Judgments, for their Diſobedience and Unbelief. (1 *Cor.* x. 5—10.) And they who, being corrupted by theſe Deceivers, fall into like Sins, eſpecially under the clearer Light of the Goſpel, muſt expect to be ſtill more ſeverely puniſhed after their Example. (1 *Cor.* x. 11.)

6 *And the Angels which kept not their firſt Eſtate, but left their own Habitation, he hath reſerved in everlaſting Chains under Darkneſs, unto the Judgment of the great Day.*

6. And as ye cannot but know, ſo ye ought ſeriouſly to conſider, and reflect upon, the tremendous Condition of thoſe once happy and holy Angels, (a ſuperior Order of Beings to Man) who did not maintain their Integrity in that original State of Honour and Dignity (ἀρχὴν), in which God created them, but relinquiſhed, and, by the righteous Judgment of God, (2 *Pet.* ii. 4) were caſt down from the Manſions of Bliſs and Glory, which he had given them to be their own proper Abode for ever, in caſe of their continuing in ſinleſs Obedience to him. Theſe, on account of their Re-

* *Turned the Grace of God into Laſciviouſneſs* may be underſtood, either of theſe falſe Teachers taking Liberty from the Doctrines of Grace, to indulge their ſenſual Inclinations; or of their maliciouſly ſtigmatizing the Goſpel-Doctrine concerning it, as though in its own Nature and Deſign, it led to all Impurity. But I am moſt inclined to the laſt of theſe Senſes; becauſe they profeſſedly oppoſed, inſtead of owning the true Doctrine of the Grace of God.

volt

volt from God and Rebellion againſt him, through Pride, Envy, and Affectation of higher Power and Dominion, than he had aſſigned to them, he has put into ſafe Cuſtody, like condemned Priſoners that are loaded with Fetters; and has held them faſt by his holy Purpoſe, Power and Providence, as with ſtrong and perpetual Chains of the horrible Darkneſs of Sin and Miſery, and diſmal Deſpair, againſt the final Judgment of the great Day; when their Torment will be completed, and when all Apoſtates, and impenitent, unbelieving Sinners ſhall *depart* from the bliſsful Preſence of Chriſt, *into everlaſting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* (Matth. xxv. 41.)

7 Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the Cities about them in like Manner, giving themſelves over to Fornication, and going after ſtrange Fleſh, are ſet forth for an Example, ſuffering the Vengeance of eternal Fire.

7 Utter Deſtruction ſhall certainly and ſuddenly come from the Lord upon all ſuch; even as it did upon the infamouſly wicked People of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, and of the neighbouring Cities of *Adma* and *Zeboim*, (Gen. xix. 24, 25, and Deut. xxix. 23) in Storms of Fire and Brimſtone, rained down from Heaven upon them for the flagitious Crimes, which they greedily committed by going into all Manner of Uncleanneſs, and particularly the unnatural monſtrous Sin of Men with Men. The perpetual Deſolation of that wicked People and of their Cities, the evident Marks of which remain to this Day, is exhibited in the ſacred Hiſtory, and in Providence, to open View, as an Example of God's tremendous Vengeance, which carries a lively Emblem of the everlaſting Deſtruction of all the Wicked and Ungodly in Hell-Fire.

8 Likewiſe alſo theſe filthy Dreamers defile the Fleſh, deſpiſe Dominion, and ſpeak evil of Dignities.

8. In like Manner alſo, theſe profligate Creatures, who vainly delude themſelves and others with their own Imaginations, which are no better than fooliſh and impure Dreams, indulge Gratifications of fleſhly Luſts that war againſt the Soul; and defile their own Bodies by their lewd Practices: Yea, more than that, they, like lawleſs Perſons, treat all the Authority of ſecular Magiſtrates with Inſolence, and ſet at nought all civil Government with Contempt, eſpecially ſo far forth as it would reſtrain their exorbitant Vices; and they vilify *the Perſons*, as well as *the Authority* of thoſe Rulers, that are advanced to the higheſt of all earthly Dignities. (δοξας, ſee the Note on 2 *Pet.* ii. 10.) † They alſo do the ſame by *eccleſiaſtical* Officers and their Doctrine, and even by the inſpired Apoſtles themſelves, who ought to be eſteemed in their miniſterial Character, as *the Glory of Chriſt.* (δοξα Χριστȣ 2 *Cor.* viii, 23. See the Paraphraſe there.)

9 Yet Michael the Archangel, when contending with the De-

9. All this is directly contrary to the excellent Temper and Behaviour of ſuch, as are moſt worthy of Imitation, even in their Treatment of the Devil himſelf; as, to inſtance

† Theſe Seducers undoubtedly reviled *eccleſiaſtical*, as well as civil Governors; and we are led to a Thought of this by the Apoſtle's comparing them (*ver.* 11) to *thoſe that periſhed in the Gainſaying of* Core againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron.*

in

vil, he disputed about the Body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing Accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

in one of the highest Dignity, When (according to the traditional and currently believed Account) *Michael*,† that eminent Chief of the holy Angels, was engaged in a remarkable Contest with the Prince of Demons, as arguing against him about having the Place known, where the Body of *Moses* was buried, that he might have a further Opportunity of tempting *Israel* to Idolatry in worshipping it, for the Prevention of which God, in infinite Wisdom, concealed his Sepulchre from them. *(Deut.* xxxiv. 6.) In this Debate the Archangel would not venture to do any Thing, so contrary to his own holy Nature, so offensive to God, and so much above his own Match in the diabolical Art of Railing, as to return the reviling and opprobrious Language of that foul Spirit; but only said, in a way of solemn Rebuke, I leave you to the righteous Judgment of God, to deal with you according to your wicked Design of drawing his People into the most flagrant Sin against his divine Majesty, Crown and Dignity.

10 *But these speak evil of those Things which they know not: But what they know naturally, as Brute Beasts, in those Things they corrupt themselves.*

10. But these daring Pretenders don't stick at vilifying and reproaching Things, both civil and sacred, (See the Note on *ver.* 8) which are in their own Nature so far from being evil, like the Devil and his Designs, that they are of eminent Worth and Importance; but the Use, Design and Benefit of which they are utter Strangers to: And [illegible] even in those Things, which they naturally know, like Animals void of Reason, and, by the Light of Nature, can't but know to be unlawful, they, like irrational Beasts, behave as though they had no Principle of Reason to guide or govern them; but act at such a monstrously perverse, sensual and brutal Rate, as to defile and debase themselves, beneath human Nature, to the last Degree.

11 *Wo unto them: For they have gone in the Way of Cain, and ran greedily after the Error of Balaam for*

11. The most dreadful of all Woes will surely fall upon their Heads: For in hating and envying those, whom they ought to have treated with Respect, they are influenced by the same malignant Spirit that governed *Cain*, when he murdered his Brother *Abel*, only *because his own Works were evil*,

† Some by *Michael* understand *Christ* himself, and others, the most *eminent* of all the holy Angels. And Dr. *Lightfoot* tells us, (Vol. I. p. 338) that "among the Talmudicks there seems to be something like the Relicks of the Story here referred to, *viz.* of *Michael* and the *Angel of Death* disputing or discoursing about fetching away the Soul of *Moses*." But this is a different Thing from disputing about the *Body* of *Moses*. However, Dr. *Whitby* says in his Note on this Verse, "that there was an Altercation betwixt *Michael* the *Archangel*, and *Samael* the Prince of *Devils*, about the Body of *Moses*, we learn from the Traditions of the *Jews*." On this Supposition, the Apostle's arguing from some known and allow'd Tradition among them, had its Weight in his dealing with them: And, possibly, he might know by divine Revelation, that this was a *real Fact*, and not an idle Story, like many others of their Traditions. The same may be observed with respect to what he says, *ver.* 14, about *Enoch*'s Prophecy. (See the Note on 2 *Tim.* iii. 8.) Upon the whole, though I am far from being certain; yet, for want of a better, I incline to this *literal* Interpretation, as more natural and less forced, than any other that has been offered on this difficult Passage; among which the most probable of them seems to be that, which takes the *Body of Moses*, in a *figurative* Sense, to signify the *Body* or *System of* Moses's *Law*. But still we are at as much Uncertainty about there ever having been any such Dispute between *Michael* and the Devil about *the Law*, as about the *Body* of *Moses*.

and

Reward, and perished in the Gainsaying of Core.

and his Brother's righteous: (1 John iii. 12, 15) And, with a Profusion of covetous, ambitious and wicked Desires and Endeavours, (ἐξεχύθησαν) they have vigorously exerted themselves to corrupt the Gospel, (*ver.* 4) and draw the Professors of it into Sin and Perdition; and so have imitated the treacherous Iniquity of *Balaam*, that mad Prophet, who, had God permitted him, would have cursed *Israel*, and ensnared them to their Ruin, for the sake of the Reward which *Balak* the King of *Moab* offered him. (*Numb.* xxii. 21, &c. See the Note on 2 *Pet.* ii. 16.) And they set themselves against civil Government, and the inspired Apostles and Servants of the Lord, to resist and reproach them, (See the Note on *ver.* 8) as *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, with their Accomplices, did in their Pride and Sedition against *Moses* the Ruler, and *Aaron* the High Priest, for which the Earth opened and swallowed them up alive, to the destroying of them all. (*Numb.* xvi. 1—33.) Awful Emblems of the worse Destruction, which shall come upon these envious and ungodly Men!

12 *These are Spots in your Feasts of Charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without Fear*: *Clouds* they are *without Water, carried about of Winds*; *Trees whose Fruit withereth, without Fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the Roots*;

12. These, like odious and filthy Blemishes and Smears upon the Face, or upon a Garment, are the Deformity, Scandal and Defilement of your Feasts of Entertainment, whether they be held in a Way of civil or religious Society and Friendship, * while they banquet with you, to gratify their luxurious Appetites, without Fear of the Guilt they contract, or of the terrible Wrath that awaits them for it. They put on false Appearances; and are as useless and unstable as empty Clouds that yield no Water to refresh the Earth; and they are driven about by their own Lusts and Passions, as those light Clouds are by tempestuous Winds, from one Error and evil Way to another: And as little Benefit is to be expected from them, as from Trees whose Fruit is blighted, withers, rots and comes to nothing before it is ripe, like the immature Fruit that drops off in Autumn; (φθινοπωρινὰ) yea, as from Trees that are perfectly, and as it were twice dead, to allude to these Men, who in their natural State were dead in Sin, and now by their Apostacy are confirmedly so, past Recovery; and they are like Trees stubb'd up by the Roots, never to revive, or bring forth good Fruit for ever, and only fit to be cast into the Fire.

13 *Raging Waves of the Sea, foaming out their own Shame*; *wandering Stars, to whom is reserved the*

13. Nay, they are not only altogether and incurably useless, but horribly turbulent and pernicious. Their furious Reproaches are belched out against the Doctrines and Disciples of Christ with Noise and Clamour, and Threatnings of Destruction, like the formidable Billows of the Sea in a

* It don't appear to me what *Feasts* these were, whether Entertainments in Token of civil Friendship, or of religious Affection, which were used among *Jews*, or *Christians*; and therefore the Paraphrase leaves it undetermined.

violent

Blackness of Darkness for ever.

violent Storm, when it rages and foams, and casts up its own Mire and Dirt, (*Isa.* lvii. 20) as these Malignants do their own Filthiness, while they pour out their corrupt Principles, vicious Inclinations and malicious Slanders, which turn to their own Shame. Under all their Pretences to be Lights and Stars, for the Guidance of others, they wander from the Truth and Holiness of the Gospel to mislead their Followers; and are like the *Planets*, which in themselves are dark Bodies, and continually shifting their Places; or like shining Meteors, which are called shooting or falling Stars. They make a sudden Blaze, and soon expire in Darkness, are fleeting in all their Ways, and run about from Place to Place to spread their wicked Principles, Temper and Courses. So highly aggravated are their Crimes, that, instead of their boasted Light and their sensual Pleasures, the Horrors of the thickest Darkness, Misery and black Despair are laid up in Store for them, by the righteous Judgment of God, to be their dismal Portion, without the least Dawn of Comfort or Hope, to all Eternity.

14 *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten Thousands of his Saints.*

14. And even *Enoch*, the seventh Person recorded in the Line of Descendents from *Adam*, (Gen. v. 3—18) foretold, in a generally received traditional Prophecy, (See the Note on *ver.* 9) such Things so long ago, as are truely applicable to the Sin and Condemnation of these very Men, saying, Observe with Attention and reverend Awe, The Lord Christ, the promised Messiah, is coming, and in due Time will certainly appear in all his Majesty and Glory, with a Retinue of Myriads, even an innumerable Company of his holy Ones, (ἁγίαις αὐτοῦ) Angels and Saints, to their everlasting Joy. (*Matth.* xxv. 31, and 1 *Thess.* iii. 13.)

15 *To execute Judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly Deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard Speeches, which ungodly Sinners have spoken against him.*

15. He will then sit on the Throne of his Glory to arraign all Mankind before him, and pass a decisive Sentence upon them severally, according to their respective Characters; and particularly to reprove, convict, condemn and punish all that shall then be found to be wicked and ungodly among them. He will severely reckon with them for all their impious Works, which they have wrought with premeditated Malice, and for all the virulent Speeches, which these licentious Sinners have thrown out upon his Person, Gospel and Cause, and upon his Members and faithful Servants for his Sake, which he will resent in the Day of Judgment, as done against himself. (*Matth.* xxv. 45.)

16 *These are Murmurers, Complainers, walking after their own Lusts; and their Mouth speaketh great swelling* Words, *having Mens Persons in Admiration, because of Advantage.*

16. The false Teachers we are speaking of, will meet with the heaviest Doom in that awful Day: For they are secret Murmurers against God and his Providence, against Magistrates and Ministers, and against Christ and his Followers and Ways; and are continually finding Fault and openly quarrelling with all his Doctrines and Dispensations, as being prejudiced against them, and dissatisfied with their own State and Condition in the World: They, in the restless Temper of their Minds, pursue their own vicious Inclinations

clinations to unlawful Pleasures; and at the same Time they talk in lofty, unintelligible, senseless Strains, with high Pretences to Knowledge and Religion; and, in the Pride of their Hearts, speak the most excessively vain and conceited Things of themselves, that have nothing in them: And they extravagantly flatter, caress and extol Persons of their own Party, especially the Rich among them, be they ever so vile; because they expect to reap some worldly Advantage from them, to gratify their covetous and luxurious Temper.

17 *But, Beloved, remember ye the Words which were spoken before of the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;*

17. But, my dearly beloved Brethren in the Lord, Let none of these Things move you from your own Stedfastness; nor be ye stumbled at them, *as though some strange Thing had happened to you.* (1 Pet. iv. 12.) To silence all such discouraging Thoughts, Call to Mind and reflect upon the Warnings about them, that have been given you beforehand, as by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ himself; (*Matth.* xxiv. 11) so by his inspired Apostles; (2 *Tim.* iii. 1, and 2 *Pet.* iii. 2, 3) which, being now fulfilled, are a Confirmation of, rather than an Objection against, the Doctrines deliver'd by them.

18 How *that they told you there should be Mockers in the last Time, who should walk after their own ungodly Lusts.*

18. Remember how plainly they have told you, that in this concluding Period of the *Jewish* Church and State, and Commencement of the last Dispensation of Grace, which is to continue to the End of the World, there certainly would arise profane scornful Deriders of every Thing that is sacred, and particularly of Christ's coming to Judgment; (2 *Pet.* iii. 3, 4) a Set of abandon'd Men, who treat these solemn Things with Contempt and Ridicule, that they may be the more easy in Indulgences of their corrupt Inclinations, according to the full Bent of their own wicked Hearts, that have cast off the Fear of God.

19 *These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.*

19. These are the very Men, of whom our blessed Lord and his Apostles warned you; Men that make Factions and Divisions in the Church, alienating themselves from the true Apostles, Servants, Disciples and Doctrines of Christ, and forming separate Parties of their own Sortment, as though they were more holy than others; whereas, in Reality, they are mere Sensualists, governed by animal Appetites, Lusts and Passions; and are intirely destitute of the enlightning, purifying and sanctifying Gifts and Graces of the Holy Spirit.

20 *But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy Faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,*

20. But as to you, my dear Christian-Friends, Take heed of being misled by Men of such corrupt Principles and Practices. But go on by divine Assistance, with Integrity and Faithfulness in your holy Profession; and in Order hereunto, Persist in seeking, by all proper and appointed Means, your own and your fellow Christians (See the Note on *Eph.* iv. 32.) spiritual Establishment and Advances in Grace, Holiness and Comfort, upon the Foundation of Faith, which is laid in the *Doctrine* of *the Apostles and Prophets,*

phets, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the Chief Corner Stone; Eph. ii. 20.) and upon that *Principle* of Faith in you, which *purifies the Heart, works by Love* and *overcomes this World*; (Acts xv. 9, Gal. vi. 6, and 1 John v. 4.) and which derives all Grace out of Chriſt's Fulneſs to enable you to *grow up in all Things into him, who is the Head*: (Eph. iv. 15.) And, together with a lively Exercife of this moſt holy Faith, Be inſtant in Prayer, under the Guidance and Influence of the Holy Spirit *to help your Infirmities*. (Rom. viii. 26)

21 *Keep yourſelves in the Love of God, looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto eternal Life.*

21. In this moſt excellent Way of proceeding, Let it be your conſtant Study and Endeavour to approve yourſelves to God, as thoſe that ſincerely and fervently love him, and delight to keep his Commandments; (1 *John* v. 3.) and be careful to cultivate this Love in one another, as alſo to maintain a ſweet and experimental Senſe of God's ſpecial Love to yourſelves, to influence you thereunto, as thoſe that are looking, hoping and longing, in a prepared State and Frame, for the final Manifeſtations, Fruits and Effects of the gracious and merciful Sentence of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, unto your complete Deliverance from all Sin and Sorrow, and Admiſſion to all the Bleſſings of eternal Life, even *for the Grace that is to be brought unto you at the Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt* (1 Pet. i. 13.)

22 *And of ſome have Compaſſion, making a Difference:*

22. And as to ſuch among you, that may be ſeduced into any Error or Sin, Great Prudence is to be uſed in a different Manner of dealing with them, according to their different Circumſtances. Some that have been ſtaggered, and in Meaſure drawn aſide, through their own Inadvertence, Ignorance and Weakneſs, and the Subtilty of Deceivers, ye ſhould treat with all Tenderneſs, Meekneſs, Condeſcention and endearing Kindneſs, and with a friendly and compaſſionate Concern to recover and eſtabliſh them.

23 *And others ſave with Fear, pulling* them *out of the Fire; hating even the Garment ſpotted by the Fleſh.*

23. And others that have gone further Lengths, and ſeem to be obſtinate and hardned, like thoſe who ſeduced them, ye ought to deal more ſharply with, by faithfully ſetting before them their Guilt and Danger, the awful Threatnings of God's Word, and the dreadful Wrath and Ruin they expoſe themſelves to, and by paſſing a Church-Cenſure upon them, if needful, that ye may awaken their juſt Fears of periſhing in the Evil of their Ways: This is the likelieſt Method, by the Bleſſing of God, to reclaim them and prevent their eternal Deſtruction; and to pluck them, with a ſort of holy Violence, as Brands out of the Fire that were very near being conſumed by it. In all which ye ſhould be influenced by an utter Deteſtation of every Thing, that has any Defilement in it; and ſhould act with a holy Reſolution to avoid, and *have no Fellowſhip with unfruitful Works of Darkneſs*; (Eph. v. 11.) in like Manner as the *Jews*, according to the Law of *Moſes*, were not to touch any unclean Thing; a Garment, that had the Plague

of Leproſy in it, was to be burnt. (*Lev.* v. 2, &c. and xiii. 52.)

24 *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to preſent* you *Faultleſs before the Preſence of his Glory, with exceeding Joy,*

24. Now, to conclude with a ſolemn Doxology, which belongs, as to all the Perſons in the adorable Godhead, ſo particularly to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, * whom we have been ſpeaking of under ſuch Characters, as are peculiarly ſuited to your Encouragement and Relief under all your preſent Troubles; (*ver.* 14, 15, 21.) I would expreſs it in the following lofty and endearing Strain, To him who has almighty Power originally in himſelf, as God, and all Office Authority and Qualifications, as Mediator; and, having graciouſly undertaken, is as willing as able, to preſerve you from Apoſtacy, and from irrecoverably ſtumbling and falling into, and by the Errors of the Wicked; and, after your State of Warfare is accompliſhed, to *preſent you to himſelf*, and to his Father, at his ſecond Coming, *a glorious Church, not having Spot, or Wrinkle, or any ſuch Thing; but that it ſhould be holy, and without Blemiſh*; (Eph. v. 27.) and ſhould ſtand with complete Acceptance in his immediate Preſence, when he ſhall appear in all his Glory, and ye ſhall appear with him in Glory, (*Col.* iii. 4.) and with triumphant and exatic Joy, and all the holy Angels and glorified Saints, together with the ſacred Three, ſhall exceedingly rejoice with you.

25 *To the only wiſe God our Saviour,* be *Glory and Majeſty, Dominion and Power, both now and ever, Amen.*

25. To this God our Saviour, who, together with the Father and Spirit, is infinitely, originally, eſſentially and communicatively the only wiſe God: To him, as well as to thoſe other adorable Perſons, be aſcribed, as is equally due, all the Glory of his divine Nature and Attributes, as God; and of all his Love and Grace, Deſigns, Undertakings and Performances, as likewiſe all the Grandeur of his heavenly Majeſty, as God-man Mediator, together with univerſal Rule and Government, Might and Authority over all Perſons and Things, in the Kingdom of Providence and of Grace, now, henceforth, and for evermore. In this Aſcription of Glory, May we and all the Saints and Angels join, as with one Heart and Voice! *Amen*, ſo let it be, and ſo it ſhall be.

* It ſeems to me, that the divine Perſon, here moſt immediately intended, is *our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, who is principally ſpoken of all along in the preceding Context, and is often ſtiled, by Way of Eminence, *The Saviour*, and *God our Saviour*, as in *Eph.* v. 23, *Phil.* iii. 20, *Tit.* ii. 13, and 2 *Pet.* i. 1; and is here called *the only wiſe God*, (ver. 25.) not to the Excluſion of the Father and Spirit, but only of all Idols. (See the Note on *John* xvii, 3.) And as his *preſenting us faultleſs before the Preſence of his Glory* manifeſtly relates to the Time of his glorious appearing to Judgment, for executing a dreadful Sentence on the Ungodly, and ſhewing Mercy to Believers unto eternal Life; (*ver.* 14, 15, 21.) ſo this exactly agrees with the Work that is peculiarly aſcribed to him, as *the Saviour of the Body*, and *Head of the Church*. Eph. v. 23—27. But I don't find that the *Preſentation* of the Church at the laſt Day is ever aſcribed to God the Father. (See my Volume of Sermons on *Jeſus Chriſt, God-man*, pag. 64, 65.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

What an Honour do the best of Men think it, to be the faithful Servants of Jesus Christ! Such are heartily desirous that all the Blessings of divine Love, Mercy and Peace may be multiplied to the Chosen and Called of God; and they lay themselves out, with Diligence, to promote the common Salvation of all that believe in Jesus, and to excite their fervent Zeal for preserving the Doctrines of Christ, just as they were once delivered to the Saints under the Inspiration of his Spirit. How careful should all Christians be to guard against turning the Doctrine of the Grace of God into Licentiousness; and against such Deceivers, as would slyly insinuate themselves into their Affections, and overthrow the Purity of the Gospel, especially in its fundamental Doctrines, relating to God and our Lord Jesus Christ! The Corrupters of this Faith are wicked Men, whom the sovereign and holy God has of old determined to punish, for their Impieties, with everlasting Destruction in all the Horrors of the thickest Darkness, Misery and Despair. Thus he has dealt with the fallen Angels, and the flagitious Sinners of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*; and thus he will deal with the Persecutors of his People, who, like *Cain*, hate and would murder them, for Righteousness Sake; or, like *Balaam*, would curse and ruin them, for their own secular Interest; and, like *Corah* and his Company, set themselves in Opposition to the Servants of the Lord, and even to civil Magistrates and all wholesome Laws, through their own Ignorance of their Excellency, and through brutal Propensions to what they cannot but know, by the Light of Nature, to be very sordid and defiling. These, under all their vain Boasts, are an unstable, deluded and deluding Sort of Men; haughty Deriders of all that is sacred and worthy; destitute of the Spirit of God; and perfect Sensualists, that aim at nothing but worldly Gratifications. But, O! what a Reproach are Persons of these odious Characters to christian or civil Society, in their feasting, with Love and Choice, together! They are not only useless and unprofitable, but injurious and dangerous: And when Christ shall appear in his Glory, with an innumerable Company of attending Saints and Angels, he will justly condemn and punish them for all their impious and malicious Calumnies upon him and his People, Doctrines and Ways. But Believers need not be staggered at, or by them, since our Lord himself and his Apostles have given fair Warning of them before-hand; nor need they return Railing for Railing, in Vindication of the Truth and of themselves, but only refer them to that God, who judges righteously. But O what a Happiness is it, amidst all these Trials, to go forward in Faith and Prayer under the Influence of the Holy Spirit, and to maintain our Love to God and one another, under a Sense of his Love to us, in an humble, patient and joyful Expectation of the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal Life! How greatly are those Professors to be pitied, that are in Danger of falling into the Snare of Deceivers! With what Gentleness are the Weak among them to be treated and allured! And with what holy Violence, as by the Terrors of the Lord, are the more obstinate and daring to be snatched, like Brands out of the Fire! May all Glory be ascribed to the only wise God, inclusive of Jesus Christ our Saviour, who is able in himself, and authorised in his Office, to preserve us from all Apostacy, and to present us without Spot or Blemish, and with unspeakable Joy, before the Presence of his own and his Father's Glory, at his second appearing without Sin unto Salvation! May we be found among this happy Number at the great Day of Account! *Amen.*

A PRAC-

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF The Revelation of the Apostle *JOHN*, the Divine, In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The PREFACE to the REVELATION.

THE Writer of this sacred Book appears with good Evidence to have been the Apostle *John* (Vid. Mill. Prolegom pag. 19—21. and See *Twells*'s Examination of the late new Text and Version of the new Testament.) Who is called *the Divine*, perhaps, because he had the special Honour of God's giving him the extraordinary Prophetic Revelation contained in this Book; or because he was an eminent Advocate for the Divinity of Christ, as appears in his Gospel and Epistles.

This important Revelation, which is most commonly thought to have been written about the Year of our Lord 96 or 97, may be cast into two principal Parts. One, which lies in the three first Chapters, and is delivered in an epistolary Form to the seven famous Churches in the proconsular *Asia*, relates to the then present State of those Churches, and the Things that would soon be fulfilled in them.—The Epistles thus directed to them were indeed designed, like other Parts of Scripture, for our Instruction, in such Cautions and Encouragements, Promises and Threatnings, as are applicable to other Persons and Churches, in like Circumstances, through all succeeding Generations. But I could never see sufficient Ground to think that they, as some suppose, were like the Rest of this Book, prophetic of a successive State of Churches from the Apostles Days to the End of the World, which should correspond, in order of Time, to that of these seven Churches, all of which were written to, as considered in their then present and cotemporary Circumstances, and not in what they would be one after another, according to the Order in which the Epistles were directed to them: Nor do I apprehend the Characters of each of those Churches to be distinct enough to mark out those imaginable Periods, which, by the Help of a fruitful Invention and forced Constructions, have been assigned to them by different learned Writers with very different Application: But some of them are as applicable to several Ages, as to any one Age of the Church; and perhaps, there

is hardly any particular Age, except the laſt that is yet to come, in which there are not ſome Churches or profeſſing Chriſtians, to which many of the Things may be applied that are found in *all* theſe Epiſtles; and this Book of Prophecy ſpeaks of a glorious State of the Church that ſhall be on Earth in the laſt Days, which none of theſe Epiſtles, and leaſt of all the laſt of them, can be ſuppoſed to exhibit to us.

The other principal, and by far greateſt, Part of the prophetic Revelation is introduced *Chap.* iv. and, as I conceive, is carried on from thence to the End of the Book, ſetting forth a regular Series of Events, which ſhould come to paſs in ſucceſſive Periods, relating to the *Roman*-Empire, and the Church of Chriſt, as chiefly concerned with it, through all Ages from the Time of the Apoſtle's Writing to the Conſummation of all Things, which ſhall iſſue in the utter Deſtruction of hypocritical and formal Profeſſors and all Chriſt's Enemies, and in glorious Days on Earth, and the everlaſting Joy and Triumph of the Saints in Heaven.

The Meaning of theſe wonderful Prophecies has been ſearched into, with great Care and Diligence, by many learned and pious Men of former and later Ages: But their Interpretations in various Inſtances are ſo very different and contradictory, and ſeveral of them ſo evidently proved by after-Facts to be intire Miſtakes, that I dare not preſume to be very poſitive in determining upon all the Events, that anſwer even ſuch Predictions, as may juſtly be ſuppoſed to have been already fulfilled; much leſs in fixing the exact Time for the Accompliſhment of thoſe, that are ſtill to be fulfilled in their reſpective Seaſons; concerning which we muſt needs be under ſome Suſpence, unleſs we could certainly know the Point of Time, from whence we are to begin the Computation of ſuch prophetic Days or Years, as are laid out for their Period.

It may be ſaid of the Prophecies of this Book, as it was to *Daniel*, when *he heard, but underſtood not*, and cried out, *O my Lord, what ſhall be the End of theſe Things?* In Anſwer to which he ſaid, *Go thy Way*, Daniel; *for the Words are cloſed up and ſealed; till the Time of the End*, (Dan. xii. 8, 9.) intimating that they are not to be throughly underſtood, till they be all completely acccompliſhed; and even the Predictions of our bleſſed Lord about his Death, Reſurrection and Exaltation were not clearly underſtood by his Diſciples, till they were fulfilled; but *then they remembered that he had ſaid theſe Things to them, and that theſe Things were written of him.* (John ii. 22, and xii. 13—16.) Nor did the Apoſtle *Peter* underſtand the full Meaning of what Chriſt foretold about the Baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt as to be extended to the *Gentiles*, till the *Holy Ghoſt fell on* Cornelius and his Company, as it had before on Jewiſh Believers; but then *he remembred the Word of the Lord, how that he ſaid, John indeed baptized with Water; but ye ſhall be baptized with the Holy Ghoſt* (Acts xi. 15, 16.)

It ſeems to me, that one great Deſign of Prophecies is to leave our Thoughts under ſome Obſcurity about their preciſe Meaning and Time of Accompliſhment, till Events explain them; leſt a certain Knowledge beforehand of the Things pointed to, and of the Times in which they were to take Place, ſhould give Umbrage to ſome reigning Powers on Earth; and ſhould diſconcert the ordinary Courſe of human Affairs, and put ſome Men upon Meaſures, which they otherwiſe would never have thought of, to fulfil the Predictions; and thereupon the Accompliſhment of the Prophecies, in their Seaſon, ſhould be aſcribed to the Craft and Management of Men, rather than to the Wiſdom and Power of God. But his bringing them about, one after another, in their proper Time and Order, without any Deſign in the Inſtruments of them to fulfil divine Predictions (as was the Caſe of *Joſeph*'s Brethren in ſelling him into *Egypt*; and

and of the *Jews* and *Romans* in concurring to crucify our blessed Lord) reserves the intire Glory of the whole to his own over-ruling Conduct; and is an undeniable Testimony to his infinite unerring Foreknowledge of the free Actions of Men, and to his all-governing Providence in whatsoever comes to pass: And as fast as any of the Prophecies of this Book are manifestly fulfilled, they are a further Confirmation of the Truth of Christianity, and of the Faith and Hope of the Church with respect to all that remains to be still performed; and are a rich Encouragement to their Patience under all their Troubles, which in every Period are foretold as to issue in bright Scenes of Prosperity and Glory. And when the whole Scheme shall be finished, every Part will appear in its proper Place and Order, and a divine Beauty will be seen to spread conspicuously through it all.

We may therefore, with some Probability at least, humbly attempt to settle the Interpretation of the Prophecies by *historical* Facts, as far as they have been hitherto fulfilled, which reach to the Time of the *Fifth Vial*, according to some Expositors; or of the *Sixth*, according to others: And yet it is hard always to adjust even *these* with Certainty; because there are some other Events of Providence, that may seem to be as fairly applicable to those Parts of the Prophecies. But, I think, the late learned Mr. *Lowman* has, upon the whole, matched *Facts* with *accomplished* Predictions, better than any other Writer that has fallen under my Notice. And as nothing ever puzzled my Thoughts on this Book more, than the *Synchronisms*, or cotemporary Events, which Commentators have almost universally supposed to be represented in the seven Epistles to the Churches of *Asia*, and in the *Seal* and *Book*-Prophecies, as some distinguish them, or, as others call them, the *open* and the *sealed* Book; so this Gentleman, in his elaborate and judicious Paraphrase and Notes, and in his Preface to the whole, seems to me to have settled the Periods of the *Seals*, *Trumpets* and *Vials*, with a good Degree of Probability, in a regularly connected and progressive Order of Time from the Beginning to the End: And therefore I have mostly followed him in *historical Facts*; and have in a Manner done so intirely, with respect to the *successive Course* of every Period, which is carried on by *seven Epistles*, *seven Seals*, *seven Trumpets*, and *seven Vials*, till all shall end in the Glory of the *Millenium* and of the heavenly State.

And as my Design is, through divine Guidance, to set this, as well as the other Parts of the New Testament, in as plain, practical and easy a Light, as I can, before the Minds of *common Christians*; the practical View is intermingled and pursued, more than I have met with in any other Paraphrase: But as large Quotations of antient Authorities would not be much to their Edification, and would swell this Volume to a disproportionate Bulk, which has already too far exceeded my Expectation and Design, I shall, generally, content myself with referring to the Authorities which he, or others have quoted to support the Application of Histories to the hitherto fulfilled Prophecies, in the Course of the Exposition. *The Contents* of all at the Head of each Chapter, and as put together at the Beginning of this Volume, will give the Reader a compendious View of the whole Scheme.

CHAP. I.

A Preface opens the divine Original, Design and Importance of this Book, 1—3. The Apostle John, *the Writer of it, salutes the seven Churches of* Asia, *wishing them Grace and Peace from God the Father, Son and Spirit, in distinctive Oeconomical Characters of them, 4—8. Declares when, where, and how, the Revelations were made to him, 9—12. And gives an Account of his first Vision, in which he saw Christ appearing in the midst of seven golden Candlesticks, and holding seven Stars in his Right-hand, which were emblematical of the seven Churches, and their respective Pastors; and describes his appearing in such strong and lively Figures of Majesty and Glory, as were suited to the Encouragement of true Believers, and the Terror of Backsliders and Apostates, 13—20.*

TEXT.

1 THE *Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his Servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his Angel unto his Servant John:*

2 *Who bare Record of the Word of God, and of the Testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all Things that he saw.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. THIS Book contains a prophetic Revelation from Jesus Christ, the exalted Saviour, to whom, as Man and the great Prophet of the Church, God the Father gave it in Commission, * that he might make known to his Servants and Saints those Things, which must soon begin to be fulfilled, and then be carried on, through their several Periods, in as certain Predictions, as if they were present Facts, relating chiefly to the *Roman* Empire, and his Church as concerned with it, till they be completed at the Consummation of all Things: And Jesus, the sovereign Lord of all the angelic Host, communicated them by the Ministration of an holy Angel, whom he sent with Authority to notify them in the following Visions to me, his Servant and Apostle, whose Name is *John:*

2. Who have heretofore wrote an authentic historical Account of Christ, as the eternal Word of God, (τον λογον του Θεου) who *is God,* and *was made Flesh and dwelt amongst us;* (John i. 1, 14.) and have bore Witness to him, under divine Inspiration, as the only true Messiah, and to the Substance of all the Doctrines which he taught, and the Miracles which I saw him perform to confirm them; and shall now faithfully relate the further Revelations, which he has made to me.

* As Christ sustained the Character of a *Prophet* in human Nature, God the Father is spoken of with great Propriety, according to the divine Oeconomy, as giving this Revelation to him, that, in the Execution of his Office, he might communicate it by his Angel to *John.* But his Understanding being infinite, as *God,* he, in that Consideration of him, had no Need of such a Revelation; and he, who *sent his Angel to shew these Things,* is stiled *the Lord God of the holy Prophets,* (Chap. xxii. 6.) which is a magnificent Description of the only true God, and seems to be meant of the same divine Person, who there says a little afterwards (*ver.* 16.) *I Jesus have sent mine Angel to testify these Things;* and these Things are here called the *Revelation of Jesus Christ.*

3 *Blessed* is *he that readeth, and they that hear the Words of this Prophecy, and keep those Things which are Written therein: for the time is at hand.*

3. Happy is the Man, who diligently reads and considers; and happier still are they, that attend to, receive and understand the Design and Meaning of the important Things pointed out in the Prophecy, which I am about to deliver, and that observe and compare the Predictions therein written, and the Events of Providence answerable to them, and bear them upon their Minds, and lay them to Heart, with an humble and holy Temper and Deportment correspondent to them: For the Time, in which some of them must begin to be accomplished, draws on apace; and, in Comparison with the endless Eternity that will follow, it cannot be long, before they shall all be as certainly fulfilled, as if they were instantly to come to pass.

4 *JOHN to the seven Churches which are in Asia: Grace* be *unto you, and Peace from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his Throne;*

4. NOW, according to the Revelation, and Commission to write it, which Jesus Christ signified to me by his Angel, I *John* send the first Part of it in the following Epistles from him; one to each of the seven principal Churches, that are planted in the lesser *Asia*. May the divine Favour, and its saving Effects and Manifestations in a special Work of Grace in your Souls; and may a Sense of that free Favour, together with all Manner of Happiness, temporal, and especially spiritual unto eternal Life, abound towards all and every one of you from God the Father, who, under the Notion of Deity, the Character of which he sustains in the Scheme of Providence and Salvation, † is to be considered as *from Everlasting to Everlasting God*, (Ps. xc. 2.) invariably and unchangeably the Same in his Being and Perfections, Counsels and Designs, and ever has been, is, and will be the Same in his Love and Care of his People; and from the divine Spirit, who is the sovereign Author of all spiritual Gifts and Graces, and of every Diversity of his supernatural Operations; (1 *Cor*. xii. 4, 7—11.) which for *the Variety* and *Perfection* of them, and with a Reference to the *seven Churches*, may be called *seven*, under the Denomination of *Spirits*, as *that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit*; John iii. 6. and who is

† *Which is, and was, and is to come* cannot, I think, be considered as a *personal* distinctive Character of God the Father, merely as *the Father*, to the Exclusion of the Son and Spirit; because what is nearly equivalent to this, and appears to be full as much *personal*, is affirmed of *the Son*, as when it is said, that he is *Alpha and Omega the Beginning and the Ending*; *the First, and the Last*; ver. 8, 11, 17, and Chap. xxii. 13; and, perhaps in Chap. xxi. 6. But if it be there understood of *the Father*, it shews that the very same divine Characters are *personally* applied to both. (See the Note below on *ver*. 8.) —But *he which is, and was, and is to come*, is a Description of *the Divine Nature*, very properly applied to *the Father*, when he and the Son and Spirit are represented, as sustaining their respective Parts in all Dispensations, particularly relating to *the Church*: For, in this Oeconomy, God the Father is to be considered as *maintaining the Prerogatives of Deity*; and the Son and Spirit, as acting either *from him*, or *towards him*. Accordingly, in the Close of this Verse, *The Spirit* is represented, as *before the Throne*, to act *from the Father* toward the Church; and in the following Verses, *The Son* is represented as acting *toward the Father* for the Church in his *priestly* Office, as well as *from the Father* toward the Church in his *prophetic* and *kingly* Offices: And he is mentioned *last*, because the Apostle designed to enlarge upon his Character.

is ever present with the Father, as before his Throne, ready to execute his Will in every Thing, and particularly in what relates to the Safety and Welfare of the Church!

5 *And from Jesus Christ*, who is *the faithful Witness*, and *the first-begotten of the Dead, and the Prince of the Kings of the Earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood.*

5, 6. And may all these Blessings be multiplied to you from Jesus Christ, through his Mediation and Merit, who, as a *Prophet*, bears a faithful Testimony to his Father's Mind and Will, and to his own Character, as the Son of God and the true Messiah; and who, as a *Priest*, having offered up himself a Sacrifice for Sin, was in Token of its Acceptance raised from the Dead, as the Head of his Body, the Church, and as the very first that ever rose to immortal Life, and *that* as the Pattern, Pledge and First-fruits of their Resurrection to it after him; (See *Col.* i. 18, and the Note on 1 *Cor.* xv. 20.) and, in consequence of this, he, as the due Reward of his atoning Death, was exalted to his Throne of Glory, with an All-Fulness of Authority and Dominion, as *King of Kings and Lord of Lords*, (Chap. xix. 16.) and *the Head of all Principalities and Powers* on Earth, as well as in Heaven, for the Preservation and Government of his People, and for restraining and subduing all his and their Enemies! (*Eph.* i. 20—22, and *Phil.* ii. 8—11.) Unto him, who has freely *loved us, and given himself for us, an Offering and a Sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling Savour*, (Eph. v. 2.) and has cleansed us from the Guilt and Power of our Sins by an effectual Application of the Virtue of his own precious Blood, which *he shed for the Remission of them*, and for *redeeming us from all Iniquity*; (Matth. xxvi. 28, and Tit. ii. 14.) and has advanced us, in our Relation to God, even his Father and our Father in him, to the high Honour of *Kings*, or *Princes*, in a spiritual Sense, that hold our Dignities under him, in an intire Dependence on him, and that *have Power to prevail with God* in Prayer, (*Gen.* xxxii. 28.) and are *Heirs of the Kingdom* of Glory, (*Jam.* ii. 5.) and enabled to govern our own Spirits, and to overcome Sin, Satan and the World; and are sanctified to his Service, as *Priests*, that have near Access to God, and *offer up spiritual Sacrifices acceptable to him by Jesus Christ*; (1 Pet. ii. 5.) Unto this blessed, lovely and loving Jesus, who is divinely glorious in himself and in his Office, be ascribed all possible Honour, and be paid all solemn Acknowledgements of his sovereign and universal Dominion, from henceforth to all Eternity. *Amen*, so be it, and so it shall be.

6 *And hath made us Kings and Priests unto God, and his Father; to him* be *Glory and Dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

7 *Behold, he cometh with Clouds; and every Eye shall see him, and they* also *which pierced him: And all Kindreds of the Earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.*

7. Observe, for your Encouragement, the happy Issue of all the following Prophecies, to put an End to the afflicted State of the Church, and complete their Salvation, and to pour Confusion upon all their Enemies, The Lord Jesus will quickly appear with awful Majesty to judge the World at his second Coming, which will be like the *God, who makes the Clouds his Chariot*, (Ps. civ. 3.) in illustrious Clouds of Heaven, with Power and great Glory, amidst surrounding Angels, according to his own, and antient Predictions. (*Dan.*

vii. 13, and *Matth.* xxiv. 30, 31.) And *that* Appearance in human Nature will be so open and visible, and so attempered by the Clouds to mitigate the brightest Rays of his Divine Glory, and accommodate them to corporal Sight, that all Mankind shall see him with their bodily Eyes; and they particularly, that joined in his Crucifixion, (*Zech.* xii. 10.) and never afterwards looked by Faith to him, with penitent Sorrow, for the Remission of their Sins, shall behold him with Terror and Anguish of Heart for having despised and rejected him: And not only the Tribes of *Israel*, but all persecuting Powers, and People of all Nations of the Earth that remain in Impenitence and Unbelief, shall bitterly lament their miserable Case, because of his coming to call them to a strict and severe Account for all that they have said and done against him. Even so it certainly shall be; and all who now by Faith look for it, and shall then be joyful Spectators of it, can't but consent to, and approve of it, as righteous, saying, with solemn Applause, *Amen.* (Chap. xvi. 7, and xix. 1, 2.)

8 *I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*

8. To add the greater Weight to these Things, for the Terror of his Enemies, and the Support and Comfort of true Believers, he, who is to come in all this Majesty and Glory, said of himself, (*ver.* 11, 17, and *Chap.* xxii. 12, 13.) * I am from Eternity to Eternity, am also the Author and Finisher of the Works of Providence and Grace, and of this Revelation concerning many of them, and will accordingly accomplish them in their Order from the Beginning to the End; and so may be fitly represented by the first and last Letters of the *Greek* Alphabet, which are *Alpha* and *Omega*: And he who said these Things, affirmed of himself, that he, in his divine Nature and Perfections, is the Lord God Almighty. (See *Isa.* ix. 6.)

9 *I John, who also am your Brother, and Companion in Tribulation, and in the Kingdom and Patience of Jesus Christ, was in the Isle that is called Patmos, for the Word of God, and for the Testimony of Jesus Christ.*

9. To proceed then to the *first Part* of the Revelation made to me, I *John*, the Evangelist and Apostle, who am also your Brother in the Faith, and in the Family of God; and am a Fellow Sufferer with all those that are or ever shall be persecuted for the Sake of Christ, and an Heir with them of all the Blessings of his Kingdom of Grace and Glory, and am called and enabled with them, through his Strengthenings, to exercise all humble Submission, Resignation and Patience in Sufferings for him, and quiet waiting for his glorious Kingdom; I was banished by the Emperor *Domitian* to a Confinement in the mountainous Island of

* As *Christ* is the Person last mentioned, and is represented as the Revealer of these Things to his Servant *John*; (ver. 1.) so it plainly appears by the parallel Places referred to in the Paraphrase, that these Titles are ascribed to him: And as *the Father* was described by like Characters, *ver.* 4, (See the Note there) it gives us a strong Attestation to the true and proper *Divinity of the Son of God*, as the same in Essence with the Father; and so may be considered as a Description of the same *Deity*, whenever it is applied to either of them, not to distinguish one from the other of the adorable Persons of the Trinity, as such, but to distinguish the *Divine Being* from all that are not by Nature God, as it is used for that Purpose in a Description of God absolutely, as such, *Isa.* xli. 4, and xlviii. 12.

Pat-

Patmos, merely for my Adherence to Christ, and faithfully preaching his Gospel, whose Name is called *the Word of God*, (Chap. xix. 13.) and for the Witness I bore to the Truth and Importance of the Things that I had seen and heard from him. (*ver.* 2.)

10 *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day; and heard behind me a great Voice, as of a Trumpet,*

10. During this State of Exile, on a certain first Day of the Week, which is commonly stiled, by Way of Eminence, *the Lord's Day*, for like Reason as the instituted Memorial of his Death is called *the Lord's Supper*, (1 Cor. xi. 20.) and which, according to the universal Practice of Gospel-Churches, I observed, in Commemoration of his Resurrection from the Dead, as a holy Day to him, (See the Notes on *John* xx. 26, *Acts* xx. 6, and *Col* ii. 16.) I was on that Day in a spiritual Frame, and employed in religious Meditations and Exercises; and, while I was so, the Spirit of Prophecy came upon me, (as it formerly had done on antient Prophets) and revealed the following Things to me; which were introduced by my being alarmed with the Hearing of an exceeding loud articulate Voice behind me, like the strong and solemn Sound of a Trumpet, such as was heard at the giving of the Law on Mount *Sinai*, (Exod. xix. 16.)

11 *Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: And, What thou seest, write in a Book, and send it unto the seven Churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.*

11. The Voice, which I perfectly and distinctly heard and understood, said to me, I, that Jesus, for whose Sake you are banished to the Isle *Patmos*, am he, who called myself, (*ver.* 8. See the Note there) and now repeat it, the more deeply to impress you with a solemn Reverence of me, and Regard to my Words, even I am *Alpha* and *Omega*, the Auther and Finisher of all Things, relating to the World and the Church, from the Beginning of the Creation to the End of Ages. And he then strictly charged me, saying, Take Care that you faithfully record in a Book the Things, which I am making known in Vision to you for the Instruction and Admonition of the universal Church; and send such Particulars of it, in my Name, to the seven most noted Churches of *Asia*, as belong to them respectively, and they are most immediately concerned in, namely, To the Churches, which are seated at the following Cities; To that at *Ephesus*, and that at *Smyrna*, and that at *Pergamos*, and that at *Thyatira*, and that at *Sardis*, and that at *Philadelphia*, and that at *Laodicea*.

12 *And I turned to see the Voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden Candlesticks;*

12. And thereupon I turned myself about with eager Desire to see from whence this awful Voice proceeded, which directed itself to me; and having set my Face that Way, I had a clear supernatural Vision of a Candlestick of pure Gold, which may be spoken of in the plural Number, as consisting of seven Branches to hold seven Lamps, answerable to the Number of the Churches, to which I was ordered to write, and like the seven Branches that were made by divine Appointment, and placed in the Tabernacle of the Lord; (*Exod.* xxv. 31, 32.) and may be considered as emblematical

blematical of the Light of Doctrine, Holiness and Comfort, which the Churches receive from Christ, and hold forth to the World, as they are all one in him.

13 *And in the midst of the seven Candlesticks,* one *like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a Garment down to the Foot, and girt about the Paps with a golden Girdle.*

13. And as the Jehovah of *Israel* dwelt in that holy House, and the Priest used to stand in the midst of the Branches when he lighted the Lamps, and particularly the middle one, which went right up from the Shaft among them; (*Numb.* viii. 2, 3. See *Ainsworth* there.) so I plainly beheld, in the midst of these emblematical Candlestics, a divinely glorious Person in the Form of an illustrious Man, which left me under no Manner of Doubt but that it was the Messiah, who was prophesied of, and frequently spoke of himself, as *the Son of Man:* He appeared to me as clothed with a magnificent, rich and splendid *Robe,* like unto, though of incomparably greater Lustre than that of the *Jewish* High Priest; a Garment which covered him all over down to his Feet, and was a fit Emblem of his priestly Robe of glorious and perfect Righteousness, which covers him, and all his Members, even down to the lowest and meanest of them: And to shew how near the Concerns of his Church lie to his Heart, and how ready he is to discharge his priestly Office on their Behalf; he appeared as girded about his Breast with a golden Girdle of inestimable Worth and Beauty, far surpassing the curious and costly Girdle of the High Priest's *Ephod,* (Exod. xxxix. 5.) with which he used to gird himself over his Breast.

14 *His Head and* his *Hairs* were *white like Wool, as white as Snow; and his Eyes* were *as a Flame of Fire;*

14. The Appearance of his *Person* also was transcendently majestic and glorious, like that of *the Antient of Days,* as represented in Vision to the Prophet *Daniel,* (Chap. vii. 9.) His Head and his Hair upon it shone like the *Shechinah* of old, which was always an Emblem of the divine Majesty and Glory; and his Hairs appeared like a venerable Crown, as pure and clean as the finest wash'd Wool, and shining with a Lustre as dazzling, as the whitest Snow; and his Eyes sparkled, and as it were stream'd out with Light as piercing and awful, as the brightest Flame of a strong and clear Fire; a lively Emblem of his penetrating Wisdom, Knowledge and Influence to discover the Secrets of all Hearts, and to purify and refine them, or else to consume them, as the hottest Fire doth the Materials that are capable of being acted upon by it.

15 *And his Feet like unto fine Brass, as if they burned in a Furnace; and his Voice as the Sound of many Waters.*

15. And his Feet seem'd to be, for Strength and Steadiness, Purity and Beauty in all his Ways and Dispensations, to the Joy of the Saints and Terror of his Enemies, like solid Pillars of burnished Metal, that had been thoroughly melted and refined, and appeared as red-hot, as though it were still burning in a fiery Furnace: And his Voice, according to the Language of his Word and Providence, was as loud and thundering, dreadful and astonishing to the Wicked, as the roaring of the Sea, when its huge Collection of Waters are thrown into the most violent Commotion by a Storm.

16 *And he had in his Right Hand seven Stars: And out of his Mouth went a sharp two-edged Sword: And his Countenance* was *as the Sun shineth in his Strength.*

16. And, to add still further to the Majesty and Grandeur of his Appearance, as also to shew his effectual Care of his faithful Servants, he was represented to me, as holding in his right Hand, the Emblem of Favour and Power for Preservation and Guidance, seven Stars, that were upheld and enlightned by him, to be the ministerial and subordinate Lights of their respective seven Churches in *Asia*; which is likewise applicable to all succeeding Pastors, as he has promised to *be with them always, even to the End of the World:* (Matth. xxviii. 30.) And there seemed to issue out of his Mouth a sharp Sword of two Edges which cut on both Sides; a proper Emblem of the Power of both his Law and Gospel, of the Justice of his Government and the Efficacy of his Word, as proceeding from his Mouth, for cutting Sinners to the Heart, andcutting off all Superfluity of Naughtiness from Believers, and for cutting down his implacable Enemies: And, as to the Light of his Countenance, it was as bright and dazzling, and its Smiles were as cheering and reviving, as the Sun in the Firmament, when it shines in its full Strength with unclouded Beams at Noon-Day, like his Appearance on the Mount of Transfiguration, (*Matth.* xvii. 2) and suitable to his Character, as *the Sun of Righteousness, that rises with Healing under his Wings.* (Malac. iv. 2.)

17 *And when I saw him, I fell at his Feet as dead. And he laid his Right Hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the First and the Last:*

17. And when in my Vision I beheld this awful and glorious Appearance of the Lord Jesus, I was so surprized and overwhelmed at it, under a Consciousness of my own Guilt and Unworthiness, that all the Powers of animal Nature fail'd; and I, like one in a Swoon, fell prostrate at his Feet ready to expire. He then, knowing, and having Compassion on my Infirmity, seemed to stretch forth his Right-Hand, the Emblem of his gracious and almighty Power, to revive and raise me up; and said, to encourage and comfort me, as the Angel did to *Daniel*, (*Chap.* x. 10—12) Don't give way to distressing Fear, as though I meant any Ill to you, or to my Church and People; No, I, the divine Saviour, am unchangeably the same in myself, in my Office, and in my Love and Care, as I ever have been; and as I have begun, so I will perfect all that concerns both you and them, and all Dispensations relating to them.

18 I am *he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the Keys of Hell and of Death.*

18. I am the great and only Mediator, who ever live, as the *Living One* (ὁ ζῶν) in my divine Nature, to secure the Interests of my Church, and was once put to Death in my human Nature, to make Reconciliation with God by my atoning Sacrifice for them: But, observe with Faith, Hope, Delight and holy Confidence in me, that I am now risen, and live for ever in that Nature which died, as their High Priest and righteous Advocate, and as their Lord and King: This is ratified in Heaven, and you ought to say, *Amen.* And to satisfy you that all shall end in the greatest Happiness of my People, I further assure you, that, in Consequence of my Death and Resurrection, I have the Power of Death

Death and of the inviſible World, to ſave or deſtroy the Souls of them that are in a ſeparate State, and to raiſe their dead Bodies from the Grave, like one who has the Keys, which are an Emblem of Right and Power, (*Iſa.* xxii. 22) for unlocking their Doors, and for opening or ſhutting the Gate of Heaven, to admit thoſe into it that die in the Lord, and to exclude thoſe from it that die in their Sins, and ſhut them up with the Devil and his Angels.

19 *Write the Things which thou haſt ſeen, and the Things which are, and the Things which ſhall be hereafter.*

19. He then repeated his Charge to me, (*ver.* 11) ſaying, Write all theſe Things down, which you have ſeen exhibited in this Viſion, that they may be preſerved for the Inſtruction of the preſent and future Generations; and record the Things which are further to be revealed to you, relating to the preſent State of the Church; as alſo the Things which ſhall certainly come to paſs, in their proper Series, from Age to Age, till Time ſhall be no more.

20 *The Myſtery of the ſeven Stars which thou ſaweſt in my Right Hand, and the ſeven golden Candleſticks. The ſeven Stars are the Angels of the ſeven Churches: And the ſeven Candleſticks which thou ſaweſt, are the ſeven Churches.*

20. Now, to explain *two* of the principal Emblems that you have ſeen in this Viſion, The covert Meaning of the figurative Repreſentations, which have been made of the ſeven Stars that were held in my Right Hand, and of the ſeven Branches of the golden Candleſtic, is this. By *the ſeven Stars* are ſignified my *ſeven Meſſengers*, ([illegible]) or *Embaſſadors* to, or *Paſtors* of the ſeven Churches, who have the Honour of being ſet over them in the Lord, and, who as Stars, which I have lighted up and taken into my Favour and Protection, are to ſhine, like Angels, in the Purity of their Doctrine and Holineſs of their Lives, for the Direction of thoſe that are committed to their Charge: And by the *ſeven Branches of the Candleſtic* are moſt immediately meant the *ſeven Churches* of *Aſia* themſelves, and, by juſt Conſtruction, all other Churches, that are, or may be in like Circumſtances, and are united together under me, as their Head, in one Body, even as the Branches of the Candleſtic in the Tabernacle were in one Stem, that they, by my miniſtring Servants in future Times, as well as in the preſent Age, may be enlightned with the Knowledge of Salvation; and may *hold forth the Word of Life* in their holy Profeſſion, Worſhip, Diſcipline, Soundneſs of Faith, and moral Converſation to all around them. (*Phil.* ii. 16.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

How worthy is every Revelation, which Chriſt has made from God the Father, of our ſerious, humble Study, and religious Regard! And how happy is it to underſtand and embrace it, as a certain Truth, which ſhall have its Accompliſhment in due Seaſon! The Records of it lie in the Word of God, and are faithfully handed down to us for our Benefit, as delivered by his inſpired Servants.—All ſincere Miniſters of the Goſpel, who are ordinarily moſt ſpiritual, whilſt engaged in a religious Obſervation of the Lord's Day, heartily wiſh and pray for all the Bleſſings of Grace, with the beſt of every Kind of Proſperity, from the Father, Son, and Spirit, to all the Churches of the Saints.——How auguſt and endearing is the Character of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who in his divine Being and Excellencies is eternally the Living One, and is the Author and Finiſher of all Diſpenſations of Providence and Grace; and

and who, in the Greatneſs of his Love, died, as Man, to ſave his People from their Sins; and is riſen from the Dead, to make them Kings and Prieſts to God, his Father, and as a Pledge of their riſing to eternal Life after him, when they ſhall behold him in all his Glory! But, alas! for Sinners, that reject him, With what Terror will they ſee him at his ſecond Coming! They will lament and wail for all their Neglects of him, and for all that they have done againſt him. In the mean while, the Church of Chriſt muſt expect to meet with various Troubles, as their common Lot, for the Trial of their Faith and Patience: But O what rich Encouragement have they to bear them with calm Submiſſion and Compoſure, when they think of the magnificent Repreſentation, which Chriſt made of himſelf to his Servant *John*, as a divine Perſon, as omniſcient and almighty, as walking in his Churches to take care of the Faithful among them, as enlightning and aſſiſting their Paſtors, and as fighting againſt his and their Enemies with the Sword of his Mouth, till he ſhall utterly deſtroy them! And what a Comfort is it to true Believers to be aſſured, that he who died to redeem them to God by his Blood, is now alive, and lives eternally, with all Power in his Hands, to apply the Fruits of his Redemption, and to order the Iſſues of Life and Death, and the inviſible State, to their Joy, and the Confuſion of the Wicked and Ungodly! To him be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever, *Amen*.

CHAP. II.

The Apoſtle, according to Chriſt's Command, ſends Epiſtles inſcribed to the Paſtors of the Churches in Aſia, *with prophetic Warnings and Encouragements, ſuitable to their then preſent, State (in which ſome Things are commended, and others reproved) and relating to what they were to expect in a Way of Mercy, or of Judgment, according to their reſpective Faithfulneſs, or not, for Time to come, as particularly the Church at* Epheſus, 1—7. *At* Smyrna, 8—11. *At* Pergamos, 12—17. *And at* Thyatira, 18—29.

TEXT.

1 UNTO *the Angel of the Church of Epheſus write; Theſe Things ſaith he that holdeth the ſeven Stars in his Right Hand, who walketh in the midſt of the ſeven golden Candleſticks;*

PARAPHRASE.

1. AS the Lord Jeſus order'd me to write to the ſeven Churches of *Aſia* about Things, which are already found in them, and will ſoon come to paſs, (*Chap.* i. 11, 19) and which they are moſt immediately concerned in, I ſhall begin with that, which I am commanded to direct for their Uſe to the Paſtor of the Church at *Epheſus*,† the Metropolis of the *Proconſular Aſia*. The Things contained herein are dictated by him, who appeared in Viſion to me, (*Chap.* i. 13, 16) as holding his ſeven *Aſiatic* Miniſters, and, by Conſequence, all other faithful Paſtors, in his Right-Hand of Power and Favour, to uphold, conduct, protect and take Care of them, and to make them, by his Light

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† Though there were ſeveral Paſtors or *Elders* of the Church at *Epheſus*; Acts xx 17. (See the Note there, and on *Philip.* i. 1) yet this Epiſtle, like the other *Six*, is directed in the *ſingular Number* to *the Angel*, Meſſenger or Paſtor of the Church, becauſe their Work and Office was one and the ſame, and ſo they were all included in the Inſcription; and, perhaps, one of them was moſt eminent and remarkable for Gifts, Graces and Seniority, though of the *ſame Order* with the reſt; and therefore the Epiſtle was directed to him to be communicated to his Aſſociates in the paſtoral Office, and by them all to the Church.

and Influence, like shining Stars in the Purity of their Doctrine and Holiness of their Lives: And he appeared as intimately present and conversant with his seven Churches of that Province, as represented under the Emblem of seven golden Candlestics, which being a Number of *Perfection*, may also be fitly applied to all Christian-Churches, as the Objects of his special Notice and Regard, to observe and commune with them, to supply them with the Oil of Grace, and trim their Lamps, that they may burn with the brighter Light, and to take Pleasure in what is good, and correct what is amiss in them.

2 I know thy Works, and thy Labour, and thy Patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: And thou hast tried them which say they are Apostles, and are not; and hast found them Liars:

2. He says particularly to you, the Pastor *, inclusive of the Church at *Ephesus*, I am throughly acquainted with, and approve of your Works of Righteousness, and the Pains you have taken to maintain and propagate my pure Gospel, and the Interests of my Kingdom, and your bearing all the Persecutions that come upon you for my Name's Sake, with holy Fortitude, Constancy and patient Hope of Deliverance in due Season: And I with Pleasure observe your Zeal for my Glory, and against Sin and Error, that you cannot be easy with those, nor permit them to continue in Church-Communion, who broach corrupt Doctrines, and practise Immoralities: And, to shew that your Zeal is according to Knowledge, you have closely enquired into the Principles and Manners of those, who arrogantly assume to themselves the Honour of an apostolic Commission; and you have proved that they are not what they vainly pretend to; and have really found them to be mere Impostors, that have no Truth or Sincerity in them.

3 And hast borne, and hast Patience, and for my Name's Sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

3. And, to your further Commendation, he says, I take Notice that you have bravely bore up under the Oppositions of false Apostles, and have been patiently resigned to the Will of God under all the Troubles you have met with from them; and have laid yourself out with great Diligence, from a Principle of Love to me and my Cause, to stand your Ground against all Contradiction; and have hitherto so constantly persisted therein, as not to sink, or be discouraged under the Weight of the heaviest of your Trials.

4 Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first Love.

4. But, notwithstanding all this, he says, There is one Thing much amiss in you, on account of which I have a special Controversy with you, and for which I must sharply reprove you; because, of late, you have grown cool and indifferent in your Affection to me, and my People and Cause, to the great Decay of that fervent Love, which worked in you, and discovered itself by suitable Fruits and Effects, in the earliest Days of your Espousals to me.

* Christ order'd the seven Epistles to be sent to the *seven Churches*; (Chap. i. 11) and therefore, though directed to the *Pastors*, the Churches themselves are to be considered as concerned and included in them.

5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first Works: or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy Candlestick out of his place except thou repent.

5. Reflect therefore with the utmost Impartiality on your shameful Declensions and Revolts from your former Love and Zeal; think seriously how much of the Purity, Pleasure and Life of Religion you have lost by them; and be deeply humbled and grieved for them; and bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance, in returning to the lively Exercises of Faith, Love and Obedience, which you honourably professed at your Conversion: Otherwise I will take away all your Gospel-Privileges, and unchurch you, that you may no longer be like a Candlestic, to hold forth the Light of Truth, Holiness and Comfort: You may certainly depend upon my doing this; unless it be prevented by a timely Humiliation, Repentance and Reformation.

6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the Deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate.

6. But I observe, and own for your Encouragement, that, amidst all the Decays of your first Love to that which is good, you still retain a Hatred to that which is notoriously sinful, and particularly, have a high Detestation of the idolatrous and filthy Tenets and Practices of the Sect of *Nicolaitanes*, * which are so directly contrary to my holy Nature, Will and Word, that I myself also have them in the utmost Abhorence.

7 He that hath an Ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.

7. Whoever is capable of hearing, and desirous of knowing Things of so great Concernment as these. Let him seriously consider, and lay to Heart, the Truth and Importance of what the Holy Spirit of Prophecy herein says, not only to this, † but to all the Churches of the Saints, that are, or ever may be in like Circumstances to the End of the World. Upon the whole then, He and he only, who, in humble Dependence on my Grace, wars a good Warfare, unto the subduing of his Corruptions, and the Temptations of Satan and his Instruments, and of this evil World, and so *endures to the End, shall be saved.* (Matth. x. 22.) I will freely grant unto him all the Benefits of my Purchase, in the sublime and substantial Honours and Delights of the heavenly State, with an irreversible Confirmation in it, even unto eternal Life; which may be considered, in Allusion to the Happiness that Man in Innocence would have enjoyed, and been confirmed in for ever, if, after having fulfilled his Course of Trial, he had eat of *the Tree of Life*, (Gen. ii. 9, and iii. 24.) which was in the Midst of the

* Interpreters are much at a Loss to determine. whether the Sect of *Nicolaitanes* sprang from one *Nicolas*; and if so, whether it were one of the first Deacons, (*Acts* vi. 5.) who bore that Name, and had apostatized, or not: But they all agree that the Doctrines, which these Persons taught, under a Profession of Christianity, and their Practices answerable thereunto, were abominably vicious and idolatrous.

† As this Admonition to *the Churches* is added at the Close of every Epistle to the seven Churches of *Asia*, it intimates that the Things wrote therein are to be applied to all other Churches, in every Place and Age, so far as their State and Condition is like that of the Churches, to which either of these Epistles is addressed. But I cannot think that the different States of succeeding Churches would fall out, just in the same Order of Time, as answers to the Order of these Epistles. (See the Preface to the Paraphrase on this Book.)

earthly Paradise of God's own appointing and forming for his Abode, as he has the heavenly one to be the Habitation of his Saints with himself in blissful Glory for ever.

8 *And unto the Angel of the Church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;*

8. And the *second* Epistle, which Christ ordered me to write in his Name, is directed to the Pastor of the Church at *Smyrna*, another *Asiatic* City, relating to their spiritual Concerns, in which they are to be told, that the Things contained therein are his own true Sayings, who according to his Representation of himself, (*Chap.* i. 11, 17, 18.) was before all Things, and will come to judge the World at the last Day; who also died for his Peoples Sins, that he might redeem them to God by his Blood, and is now risen and lives again for evermore, in a State of Exaltation, to secure all their Interests for Time and Eternity.

9 *I know thy Works, and Tribulation, and Poverty (but thou art rich)* and I know *the Blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the Synagogue of Satan.*

9. I am perfectly acquainted with, and take a pleasing Notice of, your Works and Labours of Love for my Name's Sake; as also of your enduring severe Persecutions with Christian-Courage and Patience; and I behold with Tenderness and Sympathy the extreme Want, to which you are reduced by the Violence of the Times, and which you meekly submit to, as being poor in Spirit, while in the Opinion of the World you are poor and miserable Wretches: (But you are *rich in Faith, and Heirs of the Kingdom which God has promised to them that love him:* Jam. ii. 5.) And, on the contrary, I observe, with just Indignation, the false, hypocritical and blasphemous Pretences of those, who call themselves *Christian-Jews*, as if they, like the antient Church of *Israel*, were the only Covenant-People of God, and who maintain *Jewish* Rites and Ceremonies, which are abrogated under the Gospel-State; but they are so far from being the only, or even any true Members of my Church, that they belong to it merely in Name and Profession; and, in Reality, are devoted to the Service of the Devil, and do his Work, under his Influence, in propagating Iniquity and Error, and in persecuting my People.

10 *Fear none of those Things which thou shalt suffer. Behold, the Devil shall cast some of you into Prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have Tribulation ten Days. Be thou faithful unto Death, and*

10. I, who am able and ready to support and comfort you, under all your Tribulations, admonish and charge you, to be no Way terrified or disheartened at the worst, that you may still further suffer from these wicked Men. Take Notice, I now tell you before-hand, to fore-arm you against them, that your great Adversary, the Devil, will prevail by his Instruments to persecute some of you, even unto Imprisonment and Bonds, which I shall permit for the Trial and Improvement of your Graces, and particularly of your Faith: (1 *Pet.* i. 7.) And though your grievous Troubles will last for a considerable Time; * yet let *none of these*

* It is very uncertain to what precise Period these *ten Days* are to be referred; whether in the Sense of a Natural Day, or of a Day for a Year; whether, with some, to the Persecution under *Diocletian*; or, with others, to that under *Trajan*; or, with others, to the Ten Heathen-Persecutions. But as *Ten*

I will give thee a Crown of Life.

these Things move you; (Acts xx. 24.) but maintain your Dependence upon, and Fidelity to me, even unto Martyrdom itself, and I will make you a rich Amends for the Loss of a temporal Life, by crowning you with all the Felicity and Glory of an immortal one.

11 *He that hath an Ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches; He that overcometh, shall not be hurt of the second Death.*

11. He who is willing to know his own State and Condition, Let him seriously attend to, and consider the Cautions, Encouragements and Promises, which my Spirit has given to all Churches, of like Character with this. (See the Note on *ver.* 7.) Whoever he be that obtains the Victory over all his and my Enemies, though he may not escape temporal Death, shall feel none of the Miseries of an eternal Hell, which in Distinction from that of the Body, and as coming after it, may be called the second Death, and is worst of all.

12 *And to the Angel of the Church in Pergamos, write; These Things saith he which hath the sharp Sword with two Edges;*

12. And the *third* Epistle, which I was ordered to write in Christ's Name, is directed to the Pastor of the Church at *Pergamos*, another City of *Asia*, in which he says, The following Things are what I speak, who appeared in Vision, (*Chap.* i. 16.) with a sharp two edged Sword, as proceeding out of my Mouth to execute Vengeance, by my Word and Providence, upon Backsliders, Apostates and all mine obstinate Enemies, and to defend those that hold fast their Integrity according to, and by Means of my Word.

13 *I know thy Works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's Seat* is: *and thou holdest fast my Name, and hast not denied my Faith, even in those Days wherein Antipas* was *my faithful Martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.*

13. I am a kind and careful Observer of every good Thing done by you, and take the more special Notice of it, to your Commendation, and my own Glory, as I perfectly know, that you are situated in the most insnaring and dangerous Circumstances amongst a People, and under civil Governors, that are, as it were, the Throne ([illegible]) on which Satan sits and rules with uncommon Sway; and yet, through my superior Influence, you continue stedfast in your holy Profession of my Name, and have not departed from, much less renounced my Gospel, nor your humble Dependence upon me; No, not in those Days of the hottest Persecution, in which my faithful Servant, the well known *Antipas*, § bravely bore his Testimony to me, and my Doctrine and Ways with his last Breath, and with the last Drop of his Blood, when he suffered Martyrdom at your City; which is a plain Proof of the powerful Dominion that Satan exercises over his Subjects there, in whom he works unto the producing of such cruel Outrage against me and my Followers.

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is a Number of Multitude, and all *Unites* end in *Ten*; and it is often used in Scripture *indefinitely*, sometimes for *many*. (See *Gen.* xxxi. 7, 41. 1 *Sam.* i. 8, *Job* xix. 3, and *Eccles.* vii. 19.) and at others for *few*, (See *Gen.* xxiv. 55, *Lev.* xxvi. 26, *Amos* v. 3, and vi. 9.) a *certain* Number being put for an uncertain; I therefore incline to think, upon the whole, that *Ten* is not here to be taken *literally* for that exact Number either of *Days* or Years, but for an *indefinite* Number of them.

§ As ecclesiastical History don't inform us, who this *Antipas* was, and he is no where else mentioned in Scripture, we must be contented to be ignorant of it: but he was doubtless, some eminent Martyr lately put to Death, and well known at *Pergamos* in those Days.

14 *But I have a few Things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the Doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a Stumbling-block before the Children of Israel, to eat Things sacrificed unto Idols, and to commit Fornication.*

14. Nevertheless, there are a few very blameable Things among you, which I have to complain of, and reprove you for; because there are some of your Church that fall in with the Corruptions of the Day, through a worldly-minded and prevaricating Temper, like that of *Balaam* the infatuated Prophet, who, contrary to the plain Will of God, and the Convictions of his own Conscience, used Stratagems, and instructed *Balak*, to insnare and pervert the Children of *Israel*, and draw them into the Sins of Idolatry, and Fornication with the Daughters of *Moab*. (Numb. xxv. 1, 2, and xxxi. 16) In like Manner, these temporizing Christians, contrary to my known Orders, (*Acts* xv. 29.) go into the Practice of feasting upon Sacrifices, that are offered to the Honour of Heathen-Idols, and of committing Fornication, as though they were no Crimes.

15 *So hast thou also them that hold the Doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate.*

15. Yea, what is still more heinous and provoking, there are some of you, that openly espouse and maintain the corrupt Principles of the *Nicolaitanes*, which, as has been said, I have the utmost Abhorrence of. (See the Note on *ver.* 6.)

16 *Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the Sword of my Mouth.*

16. It is high Time for the guilty Persons among you, and for you as a Church, to be heartily grieved and humbled for, and to repent of, and reform these abominable Evils: In Case you do not, I will soon come forth, in the Way of my Judgments, to punish you; and, according to the Emblem of the Sword of my Mouth, (*Chap.* i. 16.) will use my Sword of War, and of Justice, to cut off those bold Offenders, as certainly as a Plague was sent to destroy the Congregation of the Lord for following the Counsel of *Balaam* (Numb. xxxi. 16.)

17 *He that hath an Ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden Manna, and will give him a white Stone, and in the Stone a new Name written, which no Man knoweth, saving he that receiveth* it.

17. Whoever is desirous to know how Things stand between God and his own Soul, Let him carefully consider these solemn Warnings and kind Encouragements, which the Spirit of Prophecy herein speaks to all Persons and Churches, that are in like Circumstances: (See the Note on *ver.* 7.) To him, who, prizing my Favour and relying on my Assistance, shall gain the Conquest over all the Temptations of the Day, in which his Lot is cast, I will grant the Refreshments and Consolations of Communion with me, who am *the true and living Bread which came down from Heaven*; (John vi. 32—51.) and will make him Partaker of all the Blessings of spiritual and eternal Life, which consist of Joys that Strangers intermeddle not with, and are safely *hid*, as precious Treasures, *with me in God*, (Col. iii. 3.) and were typified by the *Manna*, that *Israel* lived upon in the Wilderness, a Pot of which was *laid up before the Lord, and hid in the Ark*: (Exod. xvi. 33.) And I will publicly absolve him from the Guilt of all his Sins, and give him Boldness, like a Conqueror, in the Day of

Judgment;

Judgment; * which may be illustrated by the *white Stone*, that is wont to be given to such as are acquitted, in Courts of Judicature, from all Charges brought against them; and by the *white Stone*, that is given to Conquerors in the *Grecian*-Games: And I will give him a new Name of Dignity and Honour, even that of a Christian and a *Child of God* and *Heir of Glory*, as though it were engraven on the white Stone; the Pleasure and Happiness of which none can conceive, relish, or prize suitable to its Worth and Excellence, but the Person himself, who is made Partaker of it, and knows it as his own.

18 *And unto the Angel of the Church in Thyatira write; These Things saith the Son of God, who hath his Eyes like unto a Flame of Fire, and his Feet are like fine Brass;*

18. And the *fourth* Epistle, which our blessed Lord ordered me to write, as from him, is inscribed to the Pastor of the Church at *Thyatira*, another City of *Asia*, saying, The Things contained in this Epistle are the Words of the eternal Son of God, who is by Nature God, and who, to signify his infinite Wisdom and penetrating Knowledge of all Hearts, Persons and Things, appeared, as with a bright Flame of Fire darting from his Eyes; and to signify the Purity, Strength and Steadiness of all the Outgoings of his Providence, the firm Support of his People in the Furnace of Affliction, and his dreadful Justice in trampling upon his Enemies, appeared as having Feet like polished red-hot, bright and burning Metal. *(Ch.* i. 14, 15.)

19 *I know thy Works, and Charity, and Service, and Faith, and thy Patience, and thy Works; and the last* to be *more than the first.*

19. I, says he, take particular Notice, and highly approve of all the good Things done by you, and of all the Love to me, and my People and Cause, which works as a powerful Principle within you; and of all the Services, which from that Principle you have performed for the Relief of my afflicted Members, and for my Honour and Glory; and of all the Faith, whereby you stedfastly adhere to me and my Doctrine; and of all the Patience under various Tribulations for my Sake, which you have remarkably exercised; and of the whole of your Conduct and Behaviour, in whatever you have been laudably engaged: And I with great Pleasure observe that, instead of having left your first Love, like the Church at *Ephesus*, (ver. 4.) these amiable Things are on the encreasing and improving Hand; so as that your last Works of Piety, Love and Obedience are more numerous, eminent and spiritual, than when you first entered upon the Profession of my Name.

20 *Notwithstanding, I have a few Things against thee, because thou sufferest that Woman Jezabel, which calleth herself*

20. But, though I mention these many good Things for your Encouragement, and the Honour of my Grace in you, I must, nevertheless, sharply reprove you for a few others of a contrary Nature, that you may not be lifted up with Pride, or think yourself perfect; and especially for *one* great Offence, in which you are exceedingly to blame;

* Here seems to be an Allusion to the Custom of those Days, in which a *white Stone* was given on the Occasions hinted in the Paraphrase. (See Dr. *Hammond*'s Note on the Place.)

because

a Prophetess, to teach and to seduce my Servants to commit Fornication, and to eat Things sacrificed unto Idols.

because you too much connive at, and shew Countenance to a Set of wicked Persons, under an infamous Ring-leader, who take to themselves the Character of inspired Teachers; but are really of the same vile Spirit and Temper with that infamous Woman *Jezabel* * who slew the Prophets of the Lord, and seduced King *Ahab* to Idolatry, and practised Whoredom and Witchcraft: (1 *Kings* xvi. 31, and xviii. 4, 13, and xxi. 25, and 2 *Kings* ix. 22.) And these Pretenders to a Spirit of Prophecy are tamely permitted to broach their Errors, and to corrupt and draw away my professing People to the like Sins of Idolatry and Uncleanness, and, by all Arts of Subtilty and Cruelty, to seduce them into Acts of Fornication in a literal, as well as spiritual Sense, and into eating of such Meats, as have been offered up, and devoted to the Honour of fictitious Gods and their Images, both which are contrary to my Orders about the Purity of Manners and Worship. (*Acts* xv. 29.)

21 *And I gave her space to repent of her Fornication, and she repented not.*

21. And though I have hitherto bore long with these *Jezabel*-like Seducers, that they may have Means and Opportunities for Conviction, Repentance and Reformation of their Crimes; yet they continued to be hardened and impenitent, and still persisted in their evil Courses.

22 *Behold, I will cast her into a Bed, and them that commit Adultery with her into great Tribulation, except they repent of their Deeds.*

22. But as certainly as the Threatning, which the Lord denounced against *Jezabel*, was executed after some Time, in her tremendous Death; (1 *Kings* xxi. 23, and 2 *Kings* ix. 36.) So, be it known to these Corrupters of the Christian-Faith and Practice, that in due Season I will severely punish them, as Persons, whom in my Wrath I will bring to a painful, sick and Death-Bed; and will inflict like dreadful Calamities upon all those, who suffer themselves to be seduced into the Commission of the same adulterous and idolatrous Iniquities with them; unless it be prevented by a timely Repentance and Forsaking of the Evil of their Doings.

23 *And I will kill her Children with Death: and all the Churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the Reins and Hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your Works.*

23. And as the Sons of that wicked King *Ahab* were slain, according to the Lord's Threatning to bring Evil upon his House, for the Iniquities which he was drawn into by *Jezabel*'s Enticements; (1 *Kings* xxi. 29, and 2 *Kings* x. 6, 7, 10, 11.) So surely will I bring utter Destruction upon the Disciples and Followers of these Depravers of the Christian-Doctrine and Manners, as well as upon themselves; and will do it in such exemplary Executions, as shall convince all the Churches, which know or hear of it, that I am indeed a *divine Person*, whose Prerogative it is to look into the secret Thoughts of all Mens Hearts, (*Acts* i. 24. compared

* I rather think that here is *an Allusion* to the wicked Practices of *Jezabel*, whose Name is transferred to these Seducers, because their Character is like hers, though they pretended to be inspired Prophets, than that any Person of this Name, then living, was pointed at. However, *Grotius* tells us, that some Manuscripts read *thy Wife*; (γυναικα σου) and some have thought that this Woman was the Wife of the Bishop of that Church, and was called *Jezabel*, because she was the Author of evil Things, and the Wife of the chief Man of the Church, as the antient *Jezabel* was of King *Ahab*.

with

with 1 Kings viii. 39.) and search out all the Hypocrisy that lurks in their inmost Parts, in their Principles, Motives and Ends: And I will deal impartially with every one of you, who make a Profession of my Name, as well as with all others, according to the Nature and Degree of your Doings, whether they be good, or bad.

24 *But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, As many as have not this Doctrine, and which have not known the Depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other Burden.*

24. But I assure you for the Encouragement of the Faithful among you, and of all others in *Thyatira*, though not actually Members of your Church, even every one that has not fallen in with, but heartily opposed and rejected the above mentioned pernicious Doctrine; and has not consented to, or approved, much less given into the Practice, of the diabolical Delusions, which these Impostors propagate, with the deepest Intrigue and Subtilty under Satan's Influence; and which they boast of as the Products of profound Knowledge and Wisdom, while they are indeed Mysteries of Iniquity; I say to you, who are my faithful Servants, that I will put no further Injunctions or Restraints upon you, than still to keep clear of these Abominations; nor the Burden of any more Mysteries, Laws, or Ceremonies, than are already established in my Word.

25 *But that which ye have* already, hold *fast till I come.*

25. I only insist upon it, that ye still persevere in, and stedfastly maintain your Faith, Love and Obedience, together with the Purity of the Doctrines and Precepts, which ye have already received from me, and not count them grievous, till I shall come the second Time to your Salvation.

26 *And he that overcometh, and keepeth my Works unto the end, to him will I give Power over the Nations:*

26. And whoever he be that, on these Encouragements, stands his Ground against, and comes off victorious over all Temptations to the contrary, and perseveres in the Faith and Holiness of the Gospel to the End of his Warfare, I will make him a Sharer in my Conquests, and he shall *have Dominion* over all the Wicked of the Nations *in the Morning* of the Resurrection. (*Ps.* xlix. 14.)

27 *And he shall rule them with a Rod of Iron: as the Vessels of a Potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.*

27. And as in my Office-Capacity, in which I am constituted King of the Church, I have received a Grant, with full Power and Authority from my heavenly Father, to have *the Heathen for mine Inheritance*, and to *break* my obstinate Enemies among them, as *with a Rod of Iron, and dash them to Pieces as a Potter's Vessel*; (Ps. ii. 6, 8, 9.) So I will give Power to every Subject of my Kingdom, as acting under me, and by my Assistance and Authority, to prevail against them to their utter Confusion. (*Ps.* xlix. 14.)

28 *And I will give him the Morning-star.*

28. And I will give him all the Light and Grace, Comforts and Enjoyments, that are to be found in me, who *am*, for Excellence and Delight, the *bright and Morning Star*; (Chap. xxii. 16,) and the Sun of Righteousness, who have arose with healing in my Wings; (*Malac.* iv. 2.) and he, enlightned with my Glory, *shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and as the Stars for ever and ever.* (Dan. xii. 3.)

29 *He that hath an Ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.*

29. Let every one that is desirous to know his Sin and Danger, and the Ground of his Hope, carefully attend unto, and reflect upon what the Spirit of Prophecy says, in a Way of Promise, as well as of Threatning, not only to this Church, but to all the Churches of this Day, and to the End of the World, whose Case is, or ever may be like theirs. (See the Note on *ver.* 7.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

How imperfect as to Purity and Prosperity are the Churches of Christ on Earth! Though there are many excellent Things found in them, there are others to be blamed, as in all these Churches, except that of *Smyrna*, which was infested with Satanical Enemies, and, doubtless, had its Sins of Infirmities, tho' the Love of Christ cast a Mantle over them. How critical, penetrating and truely divine, is the Knowledge that Christ has of all his Churches! His Eyes are like a Flame of Fire, and he searches the Secrets of all their Hearts. How kind and condescending is the Notice he takes of all their Graces, Services and Sufferings for his Sake; of their hating what he hates; of their Opposition to Sin and Error; and of every good Thing that is found in them! He admonishes them not to be afraid of the worst, and to hold fast what they have of the best, that belongs to their Profession of his Name. He dwells in the Midst of them, and holds their Ministers, as Stars in his Right Hand: He is the Beginner and Perfecter of all that concerns them; and as he died, so he ever lives, for them. How compassionately does he remind them of their Falls, and of the Declensions of their first Love and Zeal, and call them to Repentance and Reformation! But how awful are his Threatnings, in Case of their persisting in any corrupt Principles or Practices, relating to Doctrine, Worship or Manners, like Idolatry and Fornication! He will surely ere long fight against them, as with the Sword of his Mouth, and unchurch them. And, alas! how tremendous will the Executions of his Wrath be upon Impostors and hypocritical Professors, and upon all his malicious and obstinate Enemies! Whatever their Boasts of deep Understanding be, they act under the powerful and crafty Influence of the Devil, and do his Work, in seducing the Unwary, and in persecuting the faithful Servants of Christ. He, whose Feet are like burning and shining Brass, will trample them in his righteous Anger, till he bring them and their Adherents to utter Destruction. But O how encouraging and animating are his Promises to his People that war a good Warfare, in his Name and Strength, against all his and their spiritual Enemies, unto Victory over them! He will give them all Refreshments and Delights, in partaking of his Fruits, as the hidden Manna, and Tree of Life in the heavenly Paradise; will secure them from all the Miseries of the second Death; will put a Crown of immortal Glory on their Heads; and will give them the noblest Pleasure, which they themselves only can be conscious of, as being like the new Name, and white Stone, which no Man knows but he that has it; and which, at length, shall shine in all the Lustre derived from him, who is the bright and Morning Star. May every one, that is concerned about his own Salvation, seriously consider all these awful and comfortable Things, with a Reference to himself, as far as they are applicable to his own Case, that he may not be confounded; but may have Boldness in the Day of Judgment, when Christ will render to every one according to the Kind and Degree of his Works!

CHAP. III.

Here follow three other Epistles, containing Warnings and Threatnings, Exhortations, Encouragements and Promises, suitable to the State of the Church at Sardis, 1—6, *at* Philadelphia, 7—13, *and at* Laodicea, 14—22.

TEXT.

1 *AND unto the Angel of the Church in Sardis*

PARAPHRASE.

1. THE *fifth* Epistle, which Christ ordered me to write in his Name, is directed to the Pastor of the Church at *Sardis*, another City of *Asia*, for their Use. The

Things

rite; These Things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven Stars; I know thy Works, that thou hast a Name that thou livest, and art dead.

Things contained herein are the immediate Dictates of that divine Person, who, as Mediator, has an All-Fulness of the Gifts and Graces of the Holy Spirit, with Authority to distribute them in their utmost Perfection and Variety, (*Chap.* i. 4, See the Paraphrase there) and who holds his ministring Servants, like Stars in his Right Hand, under his Direction, Disposal, Care and Government; (*Chap.* i. 16.) He says to you in particular, which is likewise applicable to all others of your State and Character, I perfectly see through all the specious Appearances of your external Behaviour and Forms of Religion, as though you were alive to God and spiritual Things, which gives you a Reputation for Saints among Men; and, at the same Time, I know that too many of you are still dead in Trespasses and Sins; * and that others of you are grown very dead, dull and lifeless in the Frame of your Hearts, and Manner of performing religious Duties, especially when you are alone, and no Eye of Man is upon you.

2 Be watchful, and strengthen the Things which remain, that are ready to die: For I have not found thy Works perfect before God.

2. Take heed of such a stupid Temper: Watch carefully against it, and make Use of all Means of Grace, in humble Dependence on me, who have the seven Spirits, (*ver.* 1.) to render them effectual, that you may derive Light and Influence from me for adding Strength and Vigour to the small Remains of those good Things, that are in some of you; but are so weak and languishing, as to be on the very Point of expiring, unless revived by fresh Recruits: For, by the Search which I have made into your Hearts and Ways, I find such woful Defects in your Peformances, as render them unfit to be acceptable in the Sight of God.

3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a Thief, and thou shalt not know what Hour I will come upon thee.

3. As ever therefore you would make a right Judgment of your State, Call to mind and seriously reflect upon the Doctrine of my Gospel, and the Manner in which you at first received it, and heard the Preaching of it; whether it were in Faith and Love, whereby it was rooted in your Hearts, or were only with some sudden Impression and Flights of Affection, which soon wore off again: And so far as it was according to the Truth of the Gospel, and was entertained with a sincere Faith, don't give it up, but keep it with the utmost Care in your religious Regard and Conformity to it; but so far as it was only in a notional and superficial Manner, or as you have lost much of the Life and Power, with which you at first received it, be deeply humbled before God in penitential Reflections upon it, and rest not satisfied till those Defects be rectified: For if you continue careless and uncon-

* It appears from *ver.* 4, that there were some sincere and eminent Believers in this Church, though the greater Part of them were not what they appeared to be; but were either inwardly decaying, as to vital Religion; or utterly destitute of the Grace of God, while *having a Form of Godliness*, they *denied the Power of it*, like those whom the Apostle speaks of, 2 *Tim.* iii. 5. The Paraphrase points to Persons of both these Characters.

cerned about these Things, which so nearly affect your Salvation, and don't awake out of your lethargic Temper to watch against it, I will certainly break in upon you with my Terrors, in the Way of my Judgments, as suddenly and unexpectedly, and with as much Surprize to your Loss and Damage, as a Thief doth into a House, at a Time when the Master least of all thinks of it. (*Matth.* xxiv. 42—44, and 1 *Thess.* v. 2, 3.)

4 Thou hast a few Names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their Garments; and they shall walk with me in white: For they are worthy.

4. There are indeed a few Persons of Eminence, which are known to me as by Name, even in the Church at *Sardis* (corrupt and degenerate as it is) who have not contracted the Defilements of Error and Immorality, that have spread all around them, but have maintained their Integrity, as sound in the Faith, and holy in their Lives: And be it known to them for their Comfort, that they shall still be kept close to me, and live in holy and delightful Communion with me, * and shall be advanced to the highest Honours: For they are graciously accepted, as worthy through my Righteousness, and are fit and meet by the sanctifying Influences of my Spirit, (*Col.* i. 12.) to be admitted to all the Privileges and Favours, that I will confer upon them, even unto eternal Life.

5 He that overcometh, the same shall be cloathed in white Raiment; and I will not blot out his Name out of the Book of Life, but I will confess his Name before my Father, and before his Angels.

5. Whoever he be that overcomes all Temptations, especially in a dissolute and apostatizing Age like this, shall shine in splendid Robes of Righteousness, Light and Glory, that are *wash'd and made white in the Blood of the Lamb*; (Chap. vii. 14.) and I will be so far from striking him out (according to what he may sometimes fear) from the Register of eternal Life, in which his Name is, as it were, enrolled, as a Citizen and Heir of Heaven, among the Chosen of God before all Worlds, that I will publicly own him for mine, whom the Father has given me, and I have redeem'd by my own Blood, and who has, under the Influence of my Grace, bravely confessed me before Men, in the worst of Times; and I will shew my Approbation of him in the Presence of my heavenly Father and of his holy Angels, when I shall come in all my Glory to the Judgment of the great Day. (*Matth.* x. 32, and *Luke* xii. 8.)

6 He that hath an Ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.

6. He that is desirous to know the State of his own Soul before God, Let him impartially consider, and compare himself with what the Holy Spirit of Prophecy herein speaks to all the Churches, which are, or ever may be in Circumstances like this of *Sardis*, (See the Note on *Chap.* i. 9.) that he may see what Part of it belongs peculiarly to himself, and be suitably affected with it.

7 And to the Angel of the Church in Phi-

7. And the *sixth* Epistle which Christ commanded me to write, as from him, is inscribed to the Pastor of the Church

* *White* may be an Allusion to the *white Robes*, which the Priests used to wear, in Token of their Acceptance and Sanctity, when they minister'd before the Lord; or to the white Robes of Princes and Conquerors, in Token of their high Honour and joyful Triumph.

ladelphia write; These Things saith he that is holy, he that is true; he that hath the Key of David; he that openeth, and no Man shutteth; and shutteth, and no Man openeth.

at *Philadelphia*, another *Asiatic* City, for their immediate Use, and for the Instruction of all others, whose Case may be like theirs, He, who says the Things contained herein, is essentially and infinitely holy in his Divine Nature, unspottedly holy in his Human Nature, communicatively holy in his Office, and perfectly holy in all his Dispensations; and is invariably Truth in himself, infallibly true in his Declarations, Threatnings and Promises, and is the Truth or Substance of all Types and Prophecies relating to him; who also has the Government of the Church, and the World upon his Shoulders, as the Son of *David*, who succeeds, in a spiritual Sense, to the Throne and Dominion of his House and Kingdom, (*Isa.* xxii. 22.) and has the Power of Life and Death, and of Heaven and Hell, the Doors of which he authoritatively and effectually opens; and when he does so, (ὅτι) no Creature in Heaven, Earth, or Hell can possibly shut them; and when he shuts them against those that wou'd be glad to go to Heaven, or shuts them upon those that are forced to go to Hell, none can open them, either to let them into Heaven, or to deliver them out of Hell.

8 I know thy Works: Behold, I have set before thee an open Door, and no Man can shut it: For thou hast a little Strength, and hast kept my Word, and hast not denied my Name.

8. I am perfectly apprised, and approve of the true Nature, Tendency and Design, and of the Principles and Manner of your religious Services. Behold, with humble Admiration and Praise, I have opened to you a Door of Opportunity for my Word to have free Course and be glorified; (2 *Thess.* iii. 1.) and none of its Enemies, (ὅτι) whether Men or Devils, shall be permitted to have Power to defeat it; because, though you are not so eminent for Light, Grace and Holiness, nor so proficient therein answerable to your Advantages, as some other first-Rate Christians are; yet I kindly observe, that you have some small Degree of these excellent Attainments, in Sincerity and Truth; and have faithfully maintained the Doctrines of my Gospel, together with my Institutions and Commands; and have not renounced your holy Profession of my Name, as your only Lord and Saviour, notwithstanding all the Temptations you have been under so to do.

9 Behold, I will make them of the Synagogue of Satan (which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie) behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy Feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

9. Take Notice farther, for your Comfort and Encouragement, that I will give you Victory over them, who serve Satan's Interests, as a Company of his devoted Servants, that live and act under his Influence, and at the same Time profess themselves to be *Jewish Christians*, but are evidently proved by their Principles and Practices to be false Pretenders to that Character: Observe, I say, that I will constrain them to come before you with Confessions of their Errors, and to sit down at your Feet, like humble Disciples, to receive your Instructions, and prostrate themselves in your Presence, though not with religious Homage of you, yet to pay it to me, as your Lord and Saviour; and they shall be forced to acknowledge, that I have a peculiar Favour for you, as the Objects of my special Love.

10. Since

10. *Because thou hast kept the Word of my Patience, I also will keep thee from the Hour of Temptation, which shall come upon all the World, to try them that dwell upon the Earth.*

10. Since, in Obedience to my Command, you have hitherto patiently endured Persecutions for my Sake, and in Conformity to my Patience in Sufferings, and have preserved your Integrity in faithfully adhering to the pure Doctrine of the Gospel, which is continued, in my great Long-suffering and Patience, to a sinful World, and teaches Patience under all Tribulations, I assure you, for your further Encouragement, that I also, on my Part, will certainly preserve you from Apostacy in the still more trying Days of yet sorer Troubles and Afflictions, which, by divine Permission, will come, not upon you only, but upon all the Professors of my Name throughout the *Roman* Empire, * for their Trial who dwell therein, that the approved may be made manifest, and openly distinguished from others who will turn Apostates.

11 *Behold, I come quickly: Hold that fast which thou hast, that no Man take thy Crown.*

11. To support you under these melancholy Prospects, Behold, with Attention, Admiration and Joy, it shall not be long before I will come, like one in Haste, to deliver my Church and People from all their Enemies. In the Faith and Hope of this, and in an humble Dependence on my promised Grace to keep you in the Hour of Temptation, (*ver.* 10) Hold fast with the utmost Care and Constancy, Zeal and holy Resolution, the Doctrine you have received, the Work of God wrought in you, and done by you, and your faithful Profession of my Name, that none (μηδεὶς) thro' Subtilty or Violence, may ever pervert you, and so rob you of this Honour, much less of the Crown of Life, which I have promised to them who are faithful unto Death; (*Chap.* ii. 10) and that none may outshine you in any Thing truely excellent.

12 *Him that overcometh, will I make a Pillar in the Temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: And I will write upon him the Name of my God, and the Name of the City of my God,* which is *New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of Heaven from my God: And* I will write upon him *my new Name.*

12. Whosoever he be that overcomes all Temptations, I, as his Head and Saviour, will fix him immoveably, like a Pillar, in the Church of my Covenant-God and Father, triumphant for ever in Heaven; and he, like the Pillars, called *Jachin* and *Boaz*, in *Solomon*'s Temple that were consecrated to God, (1 *Kings* vii. 15, 21) shall never depart, or be removed from thence: And, to honour him with the highest Dignity, I will inscribe upon him the Name of *a Son* of my Covenant-God, and of *a Citizen* of that blessed State, which he is the Author of, and fills with his Light and Glory, even the *New Jerusalem*, which is so called in Distinction from, and Preference to the literal *Jerusalem* in the Land of *Judea*; and which is of heavenly Original, and shall be perfected in the beatific Presence of my Covenant-God. And I will inscribe my own Name, which puts new Honour upon him as a *Christian*, whom I have dignified

* The *Roman-Empire* was often called *the World*, because it extended to the greatest Part of the known World; and the Persecution here foretold is probably thought to point at that under the Emperor *Trajan*, which was more fierce and universal, than those which the Christians endured under *Nero*, or *Domitian*.

with the Adoption of Sons, and made victorious under my Banner.

13 He that hath an Ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.

13. He that is inclined to hear these rich Encouragements to Perseverance in Faith and Holiness, Let him attentively consider what the Spirit of Prophecy says, not only to this, but to all Churches, whose Characters answer to that at *Philadelphia.* (See the Note on *Chap.* ii. 7.)

14 And unto the Angel of the Church of the Laodiceans write; These Things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the Creation of God;

14. And the *seventh* and *last* Epistle, which I am commanded to write in Christ's Name, is directed to the Pastor of the Church at *Laodicea*, another City of *Asia*, and is most immediately designed for their Use, but not without an Eye to other Churches in their Circumstances: The Things contained herein are what he says, whose Name is emphatically *the Amen*, as he is the faithful Witness, (*Chap.* i. 5) and is Truth itself, and infallibly true in the Testimony he bears concerning all Things whatsoever, and particularly those which are contained in the Prophecies of this Book; and he is able to perform them, as he is the Author, Prince and Ruler of all the Creatures in Heaven, and on Earth, that God has made by him. (*Heb.* i. 2.)

15 I know thy Works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would that thou wert cold or hot.

15. I, says he, am intimately acquainted with the Nature and Quality, Principles, Motives and Ends of all that you do in Religion: Whatever your own or others Thoughts be about you, I know that you are neither absolutely unconcerned about it, on one Hand, nor fervent in Spirit serving the Lord, on the other. I would rather that you should cast off a Possession of my Name, than disgrace it by being formal and hypocritical in it; or, which is best of all, that you were sincerely zealous in a Behaviour correspondent to it.

16 So then because thou art luke-warm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my Mouth:

16. But as you are very cool, careless and indifferent about Things of a spiritual, heavenly and holy Nature, and are neither professed Neglecters of them, nor heartily affected toward them, The Time is coming when, if you persist in this disagreeable Indolence, I will cast you off with Abhorrence, as a Man nauseates and vomits up lukewarm Water that offends his Stomach. But, in order to your Recovery and finding Mercy, attend to the following Counsel.

17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with Goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

17. Because you conceitedly and vainly delude yourself, saying, I am rich in spiritual Gifts and Graces, and have an Abundance of all good Things pertaining to Life and Godliness, and am in nothing defective; and because you are so stupidly blind to your own deplorable Case, as not to understand and consider, that you really are forlorn, and miserable, and destitute of all true Riches toward God, and ignorant of your Danger and of the Way of Deliverance, and are exposed to his just Wrath and Displeasure, like naked and deformed Persons, that have no Righteousness, either of Justification or of Sanctification, to cover you.

18 *I counsel thee to buy of me Gold tried in the Fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white Raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the Shame of thy Nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine Eyes with Eye-salve, that thou mayest see.*

18. I, as a compassionate Friend to Souls in such wretched self-deceiving Circumstances, advise you humbly to apply to, and deal with me, which, in the Language of Traffic, may be called *buying of me*, as you must part with your Sins, and vain Conceits of Self-Wisdom and Righteousness, for the Treasures of my Merit and Grace, that you may receive them at free Cost, *without Money and without Price*; (Isa. lv. 1) it being impossible for Souls, so miserably *poor*, (*ver.* 17) to give any valuable Consideration for these excellent Things, which are much more precious than the finest Gold after it has been purified by the Fire: Your being Partakers of these is of the highest Importance, that you may be rich in Faith and every other Grace, and in good Works, and may be endow'd with all spiritual and durable Riches, as an Heir of the Kingdom of Heaven: And as, in a spiritual Sense, you are really *naked*, (ver. 17) I counsel you to apply to me for the bright and spotless Robe of my Righteousness,* which, for Purity and Splendor, may be compared to *white Raiment*, that you may be completely cover'd and beautifully adorned with it, and your Guilt and Odiousness may not be exposed to the Eye of incensed Justice, unto your everlasting Shame and Confusion: And as you are exceeding *blind*, (ver. 17) through Pride, Prejudices and worldly Affections, with respect to your spiritual Concerns, your only Way for a Cure is to receive the Knowledge of my Word, under the Illumination of my Spirit, which is like the most sovereign and effectual *Eye-salve*, that your Understanding may be enlightned, and you may be wise to Salvation.

19 *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: Be zealous therefore, and repent.*

19. While I give you this necessary, tender and engaging Advice in your deplorable Circumstances, you may well conclude that your Case, though dangerous, is not yet desperate, notwithstanding the solemn, close and faithful Rebukes I have given you: For whenever I see any Thing amiss in the Objects of my Love, I warn and reprove them for their Conviction, and bring them under the Discipline of the Rod for their Instruction and Reformation, that they may be Partakers of my Holiness. (*Heb.* xii. 6—10.) As ever therefore you would reap the happy Fruits of my Rebukes and Chastnings, and make a due Improvement of them, you ought to be earnestly desirous of having your Heart inspired with sacred Love, and Fervor in Religion, and Zeal for my Glory; and to reflect with ingenuous Shame and Grief upon, and with full Purpose of Heart

* As *Gold tried in the Fire* is a fit Metaphor, to signify the refined Graces of the Spirit, which inrich the Soul; (1 *Pet.* i. 7) so, to keep the Ideas distinct, I rather chuse to understand *white Raiment* to signify the *Righteousness of Christ, which is unto, and upon all them that believe*, for Justification, (*Rom.* iii. 22) than the *inherent Righteousness* of Sanctification, which is much the same with the Graces of the Spirit, that are *the inward Adornings of the Heart*. (1 Pet. iii. 4.)

turn from, all your Lukewarmness, and every other Evil, that is so prevalent in you, and offensive to me.

20 Behold, I stand at the Door, and knock. If any Man hear my Voice, and open the Door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

20. For your Encouragement hereunto, Take Notice of my wonderful Condescension and Kindness, who, after all, still wait to be gracious, and continue standing, like an importunate Lover and Suitor, as it were, at the Door of your Heart, and knocking there by my Word, Providence and Spirit for Admission into it: If any one shall attend to my repeated and endearing Pleas with him, and by Faith open to me, I will make Entry into his Soul with all my Riches of Righteousness, Grace and Consolation; will take Delight in all the good Things found in him; and will entertain him with sensible Manifestations and Expressions of my Love to him; and so will admit him to the sweetest Communion, in which we shall have mutual Fellowship here, and for ever hereafter, like that of the most intimate Friends and affectionate Relations, who cheerfully feast together, in Token of their reciprocal Love.

21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne.

21. Whoever, by receiving me into his Heart, shall overcome all Corruptions within, and Temptations from without, I will own and honour him as a brave Conqueror, and will graciously advance him to the high Dignity and Happiness of sitting with me in my Throne of Glory at the Day of Judgment, that he may concur with, and share in the Benefit of, my final Sentence upon all Mankind; (See the Paraphrase on 1 *Cor.* vi. 2) even as I myself, in my Office-Capacity, have overcome the World, and all the Powers of Darkness; and am exalted in my human Nature to the highest Power and Authority with my heavenly Father, at his Right-Hand, on his Throne of Glory.

22 He that hath an Ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.

22. He that is sollicitous about Salvation, and would not deceive his own Soul, Let him carefully attend to the solemn, awful and threatning Things, on one hand, and encouraging Things, on the other, which the Holy Spirit of Prophecy herein speaks, not only to this, but to all the Churches, according as they may be applicable to them respectively, in their several Generations. (See the Note on *Chap.* ii. 7.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

How different is the State of Churches and professing Christians on Earth! Some, like that of *Philadelphia*, are sincere, faithful and thriving; and, though but of little Strength, are highly approved of Christ, and honoured with peculiar Tokens of his Love; whilst others, like those of *Sardis* and *Laodicea*, are not what they profess to be; and come under his severest Rebukes; some among them have only a Name to live, while they are dead; others are under Languishings of Grace, as though it were ready to die; and others are of a lukewarm Temper, and yet flatter themselves as if all Things were right and well, and don't perceive that they are wretchedly miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. But O the important and affecting Difference that Christ will make between them! He, who is the Author of the Creation, has an All-Fulness of the Spirit, is divinely holy and true in himself, and in the Execution of his Office, and has the Key of Government to open or shut without Controul. He

opens an effectual Door for his Word to have free Course and be glorified; and takes a favourable Notice of the lowest Degrees of spiritual Strength in true Believers, and of their stedfast Adherance to the Truths of the Gospel, with Patience under all Tribulations for his Sake: He will bring all the Emissaries of Satan into Subjection to them, will keep them in every Hour of Temptation, that they may persevere in the Faith, Profession and Holiness of the Gospel, and hold fast what they have attained to, that none may deprive them of the Honours of their Crown; and he will soon come to own them in the Presence of his Father and of the holy Angels, and to fix their Abodes in the heavenly *Jerusalem*, as Citizens that have the Name of their God and Saviour upon them, a most excellent Name, answerable to the eternal Record of their Names in the Book of Life, which shall never be blotted out; and they shall be deemed worthy to shine in priestly and royal Robes of Light and Glory, and shall sit with their Head and Saviour on his heavenly Throne.——But how dreadful is the Case of formal and hypocritical, cool and indolent Professors! Christ is fully acquainted with, and resents all the secret Treachery and Indifference of their Hearts; and, unless cured by his Grace, will cast them off with Abhorrence, and come upon them to their terrible Surprize, like a Thief in the Night, before they are aware: But, in the mean while, How astonishing and endearing are his Patience, Condescention and Mercy, even to such as these! He calls them to serious Reflection and Repentance; counsels them to come by Faith to him, that he may inrich them with his precious Gifts and Graces; may adorn them with his glorious Robe of Righteousness; and may bring them out of Darkness into marvellous Light: His very Rebukes and Chastisements are designed and blessed, for this Purpose, to those whom he loves; and he graciously waits, in the Ministrations of his Word and Motions of his Spirit, to gain Admission into their Hearts; and, to encourage their opening to him, promises that he will thereupon manifest his Love to them, and hold delightful Communion with them, which shall begin in this World, and be perfected in Heaven. May we severally consider how far, either these comfortable, or terrible Things belong to us! And may the Holy Spirit, who speaks them in his Word, speak them to saving Purpose in our Hearts!

CHAP. IV.

The Apostle having finished the Epistolary Part of his Revelation, relating to the then present and near approaching State of the seven Churches of Asia, *proceeds to open the prophetic Scene, which was represented to him in another Vision, relating to the more general Affairs of the Church for Times to come, to the End of the World: And as he introduced the former, with his Vision of Christ;* (Chap. i.) *he introduces this, with his Vision of God the Creator, as on his glorious Throne, surrounded with a heavenly Host, which he saw under the Emblems of twenty-four Elders and four living Creatures,* 1—7. *And with their and the holy Angels Songs, which he heard,* 8—11.

TEXT.	*PARAPHRASE.*
1 *AFTER this I looked, and behold, a Door was opened in Heaven: And the first Voice which I heard,* was *as it were of a Trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew*	1. AFTER having been led into the foregoing Vision, and received the Directions, which I was ordered to send to the seven Churches of *Asia*, I was favoured with another visionary Representation of an Opening into Heaven, (See the Note on *Acts* vii. 55, 56) that I might observe what passed there. And the first Voice, which was now directed to me from the Lord Jesus, as in the former Vision, (*Chap.* i. 10, 11) was, for its Solemnity and Loudness, like the Sound of a Trumpet, after the Manner of that, which was heard at the delivering of the Law on Mount *Sinai*;

thee Things which must be hereafter.

Sinai: This Voice of Christ order'd me to draw near and come up to him, and said, I will reveal to you the Operations of Providence, relating to my Church and its Enemies, which shall take Place hereafter, in a regular Succession of Events, to the Consummation of all Things.

2 *And immediately I was in the Spirit: And behold, a Throne was set in Heaven, and* one *sat on the Throne.*

2. And presently thereupon I again, as before, (*Chap.* i. 10) fell into a holy Rapture, or supernatural Extacy, like those of the Apostles *Peter* and *Paul*, (Acts x. 10, 11, and 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3, see the Note there) under the immediate Illumination and Conduct of the Spirit of Prophecy: And as the Prophets, *Isaiah*, *Ezekiel* and *Daniel*, saw in their Visions a Representation of *the Lord*, as *sitting upon a Throne, high and lifted up*; or saw *the Likeness of a Throne, as a fiery Flame, on which the Antient of Days sat*; (Isa. vi. 1, Ezek. x. 1, and Dan. vii. 9) So the prophetic Vision clearly exhibited to my Sight a majestic, awful and glorious Throne, established and exalted in Heaven; and I saw an Emblem of the Creator and Governor of the World, (*ver.* 11) as seated with august Majesty and Grandeur, not in human Form, but in an illustrious symbolical Appearance upon his imperial Throne, *whose Kingdom rules over all.* (Ps. ciii. 19.)

3 *And he that sat, was to look upon like a Jasper, and a Sardine-Stone: And* there was *a Rainbow round about the Throne, in Sight like unto an Emerald.*

3. And he who appeared in this Emblem, as sitting upon the Throne, shined with a visible radiant Lustre, like that of sparkling precious Stones, such as the most brilliant of those, which were in the High Priest's Breastplate, (*Exod.* xxviii. 17—20) and are represented as placed in the Foundation of the new *Jerusalem*; (Rev. xxi. 19, 20.) As particularly, his glorious Appearance was like the splendid transparent Colour of the Jasper, which, being of a glittering White, with an Intermixture of beautiful Colours, may be consider'd as a Symbol of God's Purity, together with various other Perfections that are display'd in all his Dispensations, and of his gracious Regard to his People: The Appearance was also like the Blood-Colour of the *Sardine*-Stone, which may be consider'd as an Emblem of God's Justice and fiery Indignation against his Enemies †: And there was a further Representation of a resplendent *Rainbow*, like a glorious Arch over the Throne, enliven'd with a most beautiful Green, like that of the *Emerald*, to be the Token of God's unchangeable Faithfulness to his Covenant of Grace and Peace, according to his own Declaration of his Design, in giving that Emblem of his Mercy, not to drown all the Earth any more. (*Gen.* ix. 13, &c.) The whole Appearance was inexpressibly majestic, awful, grand and glorious.

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† If any Thing *emblematical* be intended by the *Colours* of these Stones, (as is most generally thought, and for aught I know there may) the Hints given in the Paraphrase appear as likely to me as any others, to answer that Intention. But we may be more certain that the *Rainbow* is a Symbol of God's Faithfulness in keeping Covenant; because he himself said, that he *set his Bow in the Cloud to be the Token of his Covenant, and of his remembring it.* (Gen. ix. 13—17.) And the transcendent Lustre of this Bow may intimate its Relation to a still more excellent Covenant.

4 *And round about the Throne* were *four and twenty Seats: And upon the Seats I saw four and twenty Elders sitting, clothed in white Raiment: and they had on their Heads Crowns of Gold.*

4. And round about this imperial Throne, I saw the Appearance of four and twenty lesser Thrones,* on which there sat four and twenty Elders, as Representatives of the whole Church of the Old and New Testament. These appeared as clothed with pure and illustrious Robes, becoming their Dignity, as emblematical both of the spotless Righteousness of Justification, and of Sanctification, and of their being a *royal Priesthood*, (1 Pet. ii. 9) or *Kings*, as well as *Priests* to their God, (*Rev.* i. 6, and v. 10) that hold their Dignities under him, and pay Homage to him; and they accordingly appeared round his Throne with Crowns of Life and Glory, like those of the most precious massy Gold, upon their Heads, agreeable to Christ's Promise to them that are *faithful unto Death*. (Chap. ii. 10.)

5 *And out of the Throne proceeded Lightnings, and Thunderings, and Voices. And* there were *seven Lamps of Fire burning before the Throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.*

5. And I saw and heard the most awful and terrible Flashes of Lightning, attended with loud Cracks and Rumblings of Thunder, and solemn Voices proceeding from the imperial Throne, like what was seen and heard at the Promulgation of the Law on Mount *Sinai*, in Token of the Presence of the Lord there, and of his dreadful Wrath against the Transgressors of that Law: (*Exod.* xix. 16—18) And as seven Lamps were continually burning before the Lord in the Tabernacle, (*Lev.* xxiv. 2—4) I saw an Appearance before the Throne of seven lighted Lamps burning in full Strength and Lustre, as Emblems of the Variety and Perfection of the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit of God, which he distributes for enlightning, purifying and warming the Souls of his Ministers and Churches, by *dividing to every one severally as he will.* (1 Cor. xii. 11. See the Paraphrase on *Chap.* i. 4.)

6 *And before the Throne* there was *a*

6. And before the Throne, answerable to the Laver or great Vessel of Brass in the Tabernacle and Temple, which

* 'Tis exceeding difficult to assign the true Reason of these *Elders* being represented as *twenty-four*. Among the many Conjectures I have met with, or can think of, the most probable may be, either that there is an Allusion to the twenty-four Courses of the Priests, which represented the Church of *Israel*; or an Allusion to the Heads or Chiefs of the twelve Tribes of *Israel*, which were their Representatives, (*Numb.* i. 4, 5, &c.) and the Number of which may here be *doubled* to signify the great Increase of the Church, as consisting of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, under the Gospel-State, or that the *Jewish* and *Christian*-Churches are now united into one; or the Allusion may possibly be to a perfect Assembly or Consistory of four and twenty Elders, as Representatives of the People.—But whether we take either of these, or any other Way of judging in so dubious a Case; it seems to me that these *four and twenty Elders* are to be considered as Representatives of the *whole Body of the Church*, rather than (as some have thought) of its *Ministers* or *Pastors*, which I suppose are represented by *the four Beasts* or *living Creatures*. (ver 6. see the Note there) For it don't appear very probable, that the Representatives of the *whole Body of the Church* should be only *four*, while those of *the Ministers* are *four and twenty*: And these Elders being represented as *sitting on Thrones*, (θρόνους) as the Word render'd *Seats* properly signifies, and their appearing with *Crowns* on their Heads, (*ver*, 4) is agreeable to the common Character of true Believers, who are spoken of in Scripture, and particularly in this prophetic Book, (*Chap.* i. 6, and ii. 10, and iii. 21) as *Kings*, and as sitting on *Thrones*, and *crown'd* as Conquerors; and they are called *Antients* or *Elders*, Isa. xxiv. 23. And, possibly, there may be some Allusion to the *Roman*-Emperor, who sat as Sovereign upon the imperial Throne, and had Kings of several Provinces under him, who derived all their Honours from him in a Dependence on him, as in an infinitely higher Sense the Church does theirs, in an intire Dependence upon the great God, who is the absolute and supreme Lord over all.

Sea of Glass like unto Chrystal. And in the Midst of the Throne, and round about the Throne, were four Beasts full of Eyes before and behind.

for its Largeness was called the *Molten Sea*, (Exod. xxx. 18, 19, and 1 Kings vii. 23) for the Priests to wash in, when they went into the Sanctuary of the Lord, I saw a bright and shining Sea of Glass pure and spotless, as clear as Crystal; which may be considered as a fit Emblem of *the Blood of Christ, which cleanses from all Sin*, and in which all true Worshippers must be washed from their Iniquities. And near the imperial Throne, and in the Midst of its Circuit, as surrounded with the four and twenty Elders or Representatives of the Church, *(ver. 4)* † I beheld the Form of four living Creatures, as Representatives of the Ministers of the Gospel, and placed between God and them; and, to intimate their being sufficiently qualified, though few in Number, for the Discharge of their Office, they were represented as having abundance of Eyes, some in their Fore-part, looking toward the Throne to receive and observe divine Orders and Influences from thence; and others in their Hinder-part, looking with tender and watchful Care over

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† The *four living Creatures*, as the Word (ζωα) signifies, ought to be so render'd, as in *Ezek.* i. 5, rather than *Beasts*, which cannot agree to the *third* and *fourth* of them, one of which had *a Face as a Man*, and the other was *like a flying Eagle.* (ver. 7.)—The learned Mr. *Joseph Mede*, Mr. *Whiston*, and Sir *Isaac Newton*, with others. suppose that these *four living Creatures* are a Representation of the *whole Body of the Church*, or of *private Christians*, in Allusion to the whole Army or Body of the *Israelites* encamping with their Standards, that bore the Figures of *a Lion*, *an Ox*, *a Man*, and *an Eagle* about the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. But Mr. *Lowman* has well observed that, as there is no Hint in Scripture, or any antient Writers, of such Standards in the Camp of *Israel*; so there is no Evidence of it to be depended upon from later *Jewish* Writings; and that 'tis very unlikely that *Moses* should make any such Images, lest *Israel* should be tempted to Idolatry, for which they had so lately suffered, and to which they were so very prone. (Vid. also to the same Purpose *Wits.* Ægyptiaca, pag. 162, 163.) He therefore supposes, with some others, that the Allusion is more probably to the *Seraphim* and *Cherubim* in *Isaiah's* and *Ezekiel's* Visions, *Isa.* vi. 1, 2, and *Ezek.* Chap. x: and that these four living Creatures were Representatives of the *holy Angels*. (See his Note on this Verse.)—But it may be Matter of some Doubt, whether the *Seraphim* and *Cherubim*, which were Emblems of some intelligent Agents, were Representatives of *Angels*; or, on Supposition of their being so, whether it were any further, than as Angels are emblematical of *Ministers*, or of some eminent *Instruments of Providence*: For in the prophetic Visions of this Book, *Angels* are spoken of as pouring out *the seven Vials* of Judgments, which were to be executed by *Men*. However, such Things are said of these *four living Creatures*, as forbid my understanding them to be the Representatives of the *holy Angels*: For both *they* and *the twenty-four Elders* are brought in as *falling down before the Lamb with golden Vials full of Odours, which are the Prayers of Saints*; and as joining with the Elders, who led their Worship in a Song of Praise to *him that sat upon the Throne*; (ver. 9, 10) and to *the Lamb*, saying, *Thou wast slain and hast redeemed* US *to God by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation; and hast made* US *unto our God Kings and Priests; and* WE *shall reign on the Earth*, (Chap. v. 8—10) which surely *the Angels* cannot say, concerning themselves. And then, in the very next Verses, 11—13, and *Chap.* vii. 11, 12, *the Angels* are *distinguished* from the *living Creatures and the Elders*, and are spoken of as joining with them in other Songs of Praise, to God and the Lamb, for Things in which they were all one way or other concerned. And therefore, even admitting that here is an Allusion to *Isaiah's* and *Ezekiel's Seraphim* and *Cherubim*, (though it be with some Difference, as *every one* of the *Cherubim* had *four Faces*) I nevertheless rather incline, with other Expositors, to understand the *four living Creatures*, as Representatives of *the Ministers of the Gospel*, who are sent to preach it in the four Corners of the Earth, in Distinction from the *Body of the Church*, or *private Christians*, which seem to be represented by the *four and twenty Elders*: (See the Note on *ver.* 4.) For if the *Cherubim* were Representatives of *Angels* in some View of them; yet the *Ministers* or *Pastors* of Churches have been called *Angels*, Rev. i. 20, and Chaps. ii. iii; and, as far as I find, all that is said in this Book of Prophecy, about the *four living Creatures*, is fairly applicable to *Ministers*: And this naturally accounts for the Honour of their being here represented as nearer the Throne, than the twenty-four Elders; since they, by their Office, stand between God and the People in their holy Ministrations.

the State and Circumstances of the Church, to *feed them with Knowledge and Understanding, as Pastors after God's own Heart.* (Jer. iii. 15.)

7 *And the first Beast* was *like a Lion, and the second Beast like a Calf, and the third Beast had a Face as a Man, and the fourth Beast* was *like a flying Eagle.*

7. And the *first* of these living Creatures, which I saw, was represented with a Face like *a Lion*, to signify undaunted Boldness and Courage; and the *second* living Creature's Face was like that of *a Calf* or *Ox*, (Ezek. i. 10) to signify Patience and Fitness for Labour in the Work of the Lord; and the *third* living Creature appeared with a Face of *human Form*, to signify Wisdom, Prudence and Compassion; and the *fourth* living Creature had an Appearance like the Face of an *Eagle*, which has a piercing Eye, soars aloft, and is swift in Flight, to signify Penetration of Mind into the great Mysteries of the Gospel, and sublime Sentiments and Devotion, together with eminent Zeal, Activity and Vigour in the Service of God.

8 *And the four Beasts had each of them six Wings about him; and* they were *full of Eyes within: And they rest not Day and Night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*

8. And every one of these living Creatures was represented, as with a Furniture of six Wings round about him, as the *Seraphim* were in *Isaiah*'s Vision. (*Chap.* vi. 2.) The Use of which is there said to be, to cover his *Face* with two of them, in Token of Humility and Reverence; to cover his *Feet* with two others, in Token of Readiness and Diligence for executing divine Commissions; and with the other two *he flew*, to intimate his Alacrity and Expedition therein: And they all appeared in my Vision as full of Eyes, turning inward to look well to their own Hearts, and attend to the Illuminations of God's Word and Spirit for directing them in the Discharge of their Office: And they, like the *Seraphim*, that appeared to *Isaiah*, (Chap. vi. 3) are continually employ'd in their holy Ministrations, and in solemn Adorations, saying, with the profoundest Reverence and sacred Wonder, in a three-fold Acclamation and Ascription of Glory to the Father, Son and Spirit, as three Persons but one God, *Holy, holy, holy*, unspottedly, infinitely, essentially and communicatively holy, is the Lord Jehovah, the Almighty God, who from everlasting to everlasting always was, is, and will be unchangeably the same; and is the Creator, Preserver, Governor and Disposer of all Things, as their first Cause and ultimate End; they all being *of him, through him, and to him, To whom be Glory for ever, Amen.* (Rom. xi. 36.)

9 *And when those Beasts give Glory, and Honour, and Thanks to him that sat on the Throne, who liveth for ever and ever.*

9. And when these living Creatures, the Representatives of Christ's ministring Servants, are thus engaged in solemn Ascriptions of the highest Glory, and of all divine Honours and thankful Acknowledgments to the great God, who, as personated by the Father, (see the Note on *Chap.* i. 4) appeared in Emblems of awful and illustrious Majesty, as seated on the imperial Throne; (*ver.* 2, 3) and is the immortal, the only and ever living and true God;

10 *The four and twenty Elders fall*

10. 11. The Four and twenty Elders, the Representatives of the Church, joining in cheerful Concert with their

down before him that sat on the Throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their Crowns before the Throne, saying,

Ministers who led the Song, (*ver.* 9.) bowed down in low Prostration, and with humble Adoration, before their Maker, who was represented as sitting on the Throne; and paid their solemn Homage in worshipping him, who only has Immortality, without Beginning of Days, or End of Years; and, taking off their glorious Crowns from their Heads, they laid them down at the Foot of the Throne, as deeply sensible of their own utter Unworthiness to wear such royal Honours in his Presence, and of their receiving and holding them merely by his free Favour: In humble Acknowledgement of which they said, Thou, O Lord,

11 *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power: for thou hast created all Things, and for thy Pleasure, they are, and were created.*

and thou alone, art infinitely Worthy, that the most exalted Ascriptions of Glory, and Honour, and Power should be paid to thee: For thou art the great Creator of all Things in Heaven and Earth; and it is by thy sovereign effective Will and Pleasure, and for thine own Glory, who hast *made all Things for thy self*, (Prov. xvi. 4.) that they still subsist, and are wisely disposed of, as seems Good in thy Sight, as well as that they at first were brought forth out of nothing into Being by the almighty Word of thy sovereign Command.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How delightful is the Thought that a Door of Access is opened into Heaven itself, through the Blood of the Redeemer, to all that are washed in it! They may enter by Faith, under the Spirit's Guidance and Influence, into that holy Place while they are here, till they shall be admitted to immediate Vision hereafter. With what awful Majesty and Grandeur, Covenant-Faithfulness to his People, and Terror to his Enemies, together with all adorable Excellencies, doth the great God appear, as on his high imperial Throne! And how surprizing are the Honours of celestial Thrones and Crowns, which his Servants and People shall be advanced to in his blissful Presence, as surrounding his Throne of Glory, and paying their solemn Homage to him with the profoundest Reverence! How courageous, diligent and laborious, prudent, vigilant, active and cheerfully expeditious should the Servants of Christ be in executing their Commission, under the Illumination and Assistance of his Spirit, in all the Variety of Gifts and Graces that he distributes to them! With what humble Adoration, and Disclaims of Merit, should Believers appear before the Throne of God, as casting their Crowns, and prostrating themselves at his Feet, and ascribing the highest Honour, Glory, Blessing and Power to the sacred Three in One, as all Things were created, and are preserved and governed by, and for him, that he may be glorified for ever and ever! And what instructive Emblems are all these, of what the Ministers and Churches of Christ ought to be, and do on Earth, till they get to Heaven, and join the general Assembly and Church of the First-born in their eternal Hallelujahs!

CHAP. V.

In a following Part of the Apostle's Vision, he saw in the Right-Hand of God a Book of divine Decrees, which was sealed with seven Seals for Secrecy, and could be opened by none but Christ; 1—5. He, appearing under the Emblem of a Lamb in the Midst of the Throne, took the Book to open it; 6, 7. Upon which the four living Creatures and four and twenty Elders ascribe

ascribe all Honour to him for undertaking this difficult Work, and for redeeming them to God by his Blood, and making them Kings and Priests to him, 8—10. *And an innumerable Company of Angels join with them in another Song of Praise to God and the Lamb*, 11—14.

TEXT.

1 AND *I saw in the Right Hand of him that sat on the Throne, a Book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven Seals.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. AND I further saw in my Vision of God, who sat on the imperial Throne, the Appearance of a Book or Roll, which, methought, he held, as it were, in his Right-hand, to intimate that he would maintain and execute its Contents. This Book was full of written Records, as I afterwards understood, relating to such important Events, concerning the Church and the *Roman*-Empire, and even the whole World, as God had determined to bring to pass in their Order; and it was sealed with seven Seals, † according to the seven principal Parts contained in it, one on the outside of each to prevent its being looked into and read, till they in their Order should be opened; (*Isa.* xxix. 11.) Thereby intimating that God's Purposes, which are as certainly recorded in his own eternal Mind, as if they had been wrote down in a Book, are as much concealed from the Knowledge of all Creatures 'till God shall please to reveal them, as the Writing of any Book can be, that is closely sealed up with ever so many Seals to keep it secure and secret till it is opened.

2 *And I saw a strong Angel proclaiming with a loud Voice, Who is worthy to open the Book, and to loose the Seals thereof?*

2. And I saw a mighty Angel, standing forth and crying out with a strong and earnest Voice, in a Way of Proclamation and Challenge to the whole Creation, Is there any one of you all, that is sufficiently qualified, or has Worth and Dignity enough to unfold the Contents of this Book, and break open the Seals that are set upon it, so as to be able to understand and make known the secret Purposes of God with respect to his Dispensations, which are to be fulfilled in their proper Time and Course?

† *The most common Books* of the Antients were not like ours, that consist of many Leaves bound together; but were *Volumes*, or long Pieces of Parchment, that were rolled upon a round Stick, in like Manner as Silks or Stuffs often are in our Days. This Book of Prophecy, which, according to our Translation, was written *within and on the Backside*, might, by a little Alteration of the pointing be read, *written within, and sealed on the Backside*, or *without*, (ἔξωθεν) as *Steven's* and several other Copies read it. (Vid. *Grot.* and *Mill.* in loc.) And, according to *Grotius*, the Words *sealed with seven Seals* are a *Prolepsis*; and are to be understood, not as though the Apostle saw them all on the Outside; but there were seven Volumes wrapt up one within another, each of which was sealed; so that, upon opening and unrolling the first, the second appeared to be sealed up, till that was opened, and so on to the *seventh*.—And this seems to be countenanced by the opening of the Seals, one after another, in the next Chapter: For in Case all the seven Seals had been on the Outside, none of the Volumes could have been read, till all the Seals were loosed; whereas upon opening of every Seal, the next came in Course to be opened too. And *Paræus*, after others, conceived that, though this Book was only visional; yet it is to be understood as the Emblem of *this Book of Revelation* itself, in which Christ was pleased to reveal such Things to *John*, as he afterwards committed to writing for the Use of the Church.

3. And

3 *And no Man in Heaven nor in Earth, neither under the Earth, was able to open the Book, neither to look thereon.*

3. And none (οὐδεὶς) in the whole Compass of created Beings, no Angel in Heaven, nor any Creature living upon Earth, nor any departed Spirit of the most famous Patriarchs, Prophets, or Apostles, whose Bodies are laid under the Earth, was capable, or deemed fit and worthy of the Honour of penetrating into the Secrets of God's Counsels, or of so much as looking into them to discern any Thing of them, as was signified by there being no one found among them all, that could open this sealed Book, or look into a single Line of it; but they all stood silent and aghast, as being conscious to themselves of utter Insufficiency for it.

4 *And I wept much, because no Man was found worthy to open, and to read the Book, neither to look thereon.*

4. And as I apprehended that Things of vast Consequence were included in this Book of divine Decrees, relating to future Events, which I hoped and earnestly desired might by some Means or other be revealed to me, I was exceedingly grieved and burst out into Floods of Tears; because, in Answer to this universal Summons, no Creature could be found equal to this arduous Task of discovering the secret Designs of Providence, relating to the Church in this World, till it shall be glorified in a better; as was signified by there being none in the whole Creation, that could loosen the Seals, and read this emblematical Book, or get the least Insight into its Records, that he might reveal them.

5 *And one of the Elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the Tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the Book, and to loose the seven Seals thereof.*

5. And while my Spirit was thus troubled within me, one of the four and twenty Elders, or Representatives of the Church, spake seasonably and comfortably to me, saying, Refrain your Eyes from Tears on Account of there being no mere Creature, that can unfold these Secrets; Behold! There is a divine Person, the only true Messiah, who, according to antient Prophecies of him, as the victorious Prince of the Tribe of *Judah*, is, for Strength and Eminence, like a *Lion*, to maintain and defend his Property, and tear his Enemies to Pieces; (*Gen.* xlix. 9, 10) and is not only sprung in his human Nature from that Tribe, as a Descendent of *Jesse*, the Father of *David*; but in his divine Nature, and Office-Character, is the Root or Source of all the Happiness and Glory of his Kingdom, which was typified by that of *David*; (Isa. xi. 1, 10.) This almighty Conqueror has overcome all Obstructions, (ἐνίκησε) and obtained the Honour, by the Merit of his Death, to disclose the divine Counsels, the Emblem of which is his opening the Book, and taking off its seven Seals, that the Things contained therein might no longer remain absolute Secrets, but be gradually made manifest in a regular Succession of Providences to explain them.

6 *And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the Throne, and of the four Beasts, and in*

6. Hereupon I looked to see this wonderful Person; And, behold! to my immediate Relief and transporting Joy, I had a Vision of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the Glory of his mediatorial Exaltation in human Nature, at the Father's

the midſt of the Elders, ſtood a Lamb as it had been ſlain, having ſeven Horns, and ſeven Eyes, which are the ſeven Spirits of God ſent forth into all the Earth.

Right-hand, as ſtanding near the Throne, and within the Circle of the four living Creatures, and of the four and twenty Elders, to mediate between God and them; I ſaw him in this Poſture of Readineſs and Ability to execute all his Offices of a Prophet, Prieſt and King, which were repreſented under proper Emblems of them ſeverally. His *prieſtly* Office was repreſented by his appearing with evident Characters of *the Lamb of God*, who had been ſlain, as a propitiatory Sacrifice to *take away the Sin of the World*, when *through the eternal Spirit he offered himſelf without Spot unto God*; (John i. 29, and Heb. ix. 14.) and who interceeds before the Throne in Virtue of his atoning Blood: His *kingly* Office was repreſented by the Emblem of his having *ſeven Horns*, a Number of Perfection, to denote his almighty Power to execute the Will of God's Purpoſe to protect, ſupport and defend his Church, and puſh down all his and their Enemies: And his *prophetic* Office was repreſented by the Emblem of his having *ſeven Eyes*, to denote that *all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge are in him*, (Col. ii. 3.) that he has a thorough Foreſight of all Events, and an unmeaſurable Fulneſs of the Spirit of Wiſdom and Revelation, whoſe Gifts and Graces are under his Direction, to be iſſued forth, in all their Variety and Excellence, for the Benefit of his Miniſters and People, wherever they are ſcattered through the whole Earth.

7 *And he came and took the Book out of the Right Hand of him that ſat upon the Throne.*

7. And, as I further ſaw in my Viſion, the Lord Jeſus came cloſe up to the Throne, and received the Book out of the Right-hand of the Father, who ſat upon it, and gave the Book to him, as a Signal of his delivering all Power in Heaven and Earth to him; as his *receiving* it alſo was, of his being both able and willing to open the Meaning of the Things contained therein, and to take Care that they ſhould be effectually accompliſhed in their proper Time and Order, according to the divine Purpoſe about them.

8 *And when he had taken the Book, the four Beaſts, and four* and *twenty Elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them Harps, and golden Vials full of Odours, which are the Prayers of Saints,*

8. And when he had taken the Book into his own Hand, which carried this Intimation of his gracious Deſign, the four living Creatures, as Repreſentatives of his miniſtring Servants, and the four and twenty Elders, as Repreſentatives of the Church, proſtrated themſelves with the profoundeſt Reverence and Humility before this glorious Lamb, and cheerfully united in their ſolemn Homage of Adoration and Worſhip, Prayer and Praiſe to him, juſt as they had before to the Father on his imperial Throne; (*Chap.* iv. 9, 10, 11.) all of which, in Alluſion to one of the chief muſical Inſtruments, that were uſed for Thankſgiving and Praiſe in the Temple-ſervice, appeared with Harps, as Emblems of the Melody of their Hearts, and of the moſt charming Notes in their praiſing Song; and each of them appeared with Cups full of Incenſe, (θυμιαμάτων) like the typical Cenſers of pure Gold, in which the Prieſts were wont to burn Incenſe before the Lord, as Emblems of the Prayers that are offered up

up by the Church and its Minifters, (*Pf.* cxli. 2.) and are made acceptable to God, as prefented with the fweet Perfume of the Merit and Advocacy of their great High Prieft, (*Rev.* viii. 3, 4.)

9 *And they fung a new Song, faying, Thou art worthy to take the Book, and to open the Seals thereof: for thou waft flain, and haft redeemed us to God by thy Blood out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People and Nation;*

9. And they joined together, as with one Heart and Voice, in finging a moft excellent Song, which, for that Reafon, may very properly be called a *new Song*, fuited to the prefent joyful Occafion (*ver.* 7.) and fitted for the Gofpel-State, in Confequence of the Death of Chrift, faying, Thou, O fpotlefs Lamb of God, and thou only, art thoroughly qualified for, and deferveft the Honour of knowing and opening the eternal Counfels of God, as fignified by thy taking the Book, and breaking open its Seals, that the Things contained therein may not be intirely hid from all Mankind: For thou waft *led as a Lamb to the Slaughter*, and *madeft thy Soul an Offering for Sin*; (Ifa. liii. 7, 10.) and haft bought us out of the Bondage of the Law, and of Sin and Satan, to God, as his peculiar Property, for his Honour and Service, (*Luke* i. 74, 75.) and for Communion with him, and an everlafting Enjoyment of him; which thou haft done by the ineftimable Price of thy precious Blood, * whereby thou haft redeemed not all of every Nation, but us from among all others of every Tribe, and Language, and People, and Nation, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, with whom we lived, and were equally involved in Guilt, and expofed to Deftruction.

10 *And haft made us unto our God Kings and Priefts: and we fhall reign on the Earth.*

10. And thou haft advanced us to the moft honourable Relations to our Covenant-God and Father, in making us true *Ifraelites*, who *as* PRINCES *have Power with God and prevail*, (Gen. xxxii. 28.) and in confecrating us to him and his Service, as *Kings*, to mafter and fubdue our own Spirits, and all indwelling Corruption, and overcome the World, (1 *John* v. 4.) in a Dependence on him and Devotednefs to his Fear; and as *Priefts* to have free *Liberty of Accefs*, through thee, *by one Spirit to the Father*, (Eph. ii. 18) and to offer up fuch fpiritual Sacrifices of Prayer and Praife, as are acceptable to him on thine Account: (1 *Pet.* ii. 5.) And we through thy Favour, Merit and Influence, fhall gain the Victory, and triumph over all our fpiritual Enemies, Sin, Satan and the World, even while we are upon Earth. (*Rom.* viii. 37.)

11 *And I beheld, and I heard the Voice of many Angels round about the Throne, and the Beafts, and the Elders: and the Number of them was*

11 And I looked again for ftill further Difcoveries of this glorious Scene, and heard the melodious Voice of a vaft Multitude of holy Angels, which *encamp round about them that fear the Lord*, (Pf. xxxiv. 7.) and furrounded the imperial Throne, and the living Creatures, the Reprefentatives of Gofpel-minifters, who were neareft the Throne, (See the Note on *Chap.* iv. 6.) and the Elders, the Repre-

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* *The Redemption* here fpoken of is that, which Chrift made *by his Blood*, and is faid to be *out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation*, which carries the ftrongeft Intimation, that he paid *the Price of Redemption*, not for every Individual of them, but for *fome* from among them all.

ten Thousand Times Ten Thousand, and Thousands of Thousands.

sentatives of the Church, who were nearer it than the Angels themselves: These joined in harmonious Concert with them, to express their Praises, *as they* also were confirmed by Christ, and rejoiced in his Favour to Men; (See *Luke* ii. 13, 14, *Eph* iii. 10, and 1 *Pet* i. 12) Their Number was ten Thousand Times Ten Thousand, and Thousands multiplied by Thousands, (See *Ps.* lxviii. 17, and *Dan.* vii. 10.) yea, *an innumerable Company* of them, (*Heb.* xii. 22.)

12 *Saying with a loud Voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing.*

22. Saying with a strong, lively and articulate Voice, with cheerful Hearts, and lofty Notes of Joy and Praise, Infinitely and only Worthy is this exalted Lamb of all the Honours, not only of his divine Person, but also of his mediatorial Office, who was slain in offering up himself to God a Sacrifice for Sin, that the general Assembly and Church of the First-born may be joined to the angelic Quire in Heaven. (*Heb.* xii. 23.) He, undoubtedly, deserves to receive all grateful Acknowledgments, and high Ascriptions of universal Authority and Dominion over all, and of inexhaustible Riches of Grace and Glory, and of unsearchable Wisdom and invincible Strength, and of every Kind of religious Honour, and of all divine and mediatorial Glory, and of the liveliest adoring Praises, which of right belong to him, who he is completely qualified for discharging the high Trust, that the Father has committed to him.

13 *And every Creature which is in Heaven, and on the Earth, and under the Earth, and such as are in the Sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power* be *unto him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*

13. And, methought, I heard the whole Creation concurring in the Song; even all the Angels in Heaven, and all the Saints on Earth, and all the separate Spirits of the just made perfect, whose Bodies are buried in the Earth and in the Bottom of the Sea; yea, methought, I heard all Creatures contained in them, and particularly all the sensitive Creation, ecchoing to the Redeemer's Praise for the Deliverance he will bring to them *from the Bondage of Corruption into the glorious Liberty of the Children of God*, (Rom. viii. 19—22. See the Note there) saying, May all united Thanksgivings, and Honour, and Glory, and Might, and Dominion be equally ascribed to God the Father, who sits on the imperial Throne, and to the adorable Lamb, who is God, and *purchased the Church with his own Blood!* (Acts xx. 28.) May these Tributes of Praise be perpetuated to them jointly from henceforth to all Eternity!

14 *And the four Beasts said, Amen. And the four* and *twenty Elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.*

14. And the four living Creatures, the Representatives of the Ministers of the Church, who had began the Chorus, (*ver.* 8) closed it, saying *Amen*, so it ought to be, and so according to our earnest Desire it shall be; and the four and twenty Elders, the Representatives of the Body of the Church itself, readily consenting, prostrated themselves with humble Reverence, and paid their religious Adorations to the ever and only living and true God, inclusive of the living Redeemer, to whom they ascribed equal Honours (*ver.* 13.) and who is unchangeably *the same*, in his Person and Office, *Yesterday, and to Day, and for ever.* (Heb. xiii. 8.)

RECOI-

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a Privilege and Pleaſure is it to be acquainted with the Counſels of God for our Support under every Trial, till our Happineſs ſhall be perfected in eternal Salvation! And what a Grief to have them hid from us! But, bleſſed be God, that, when no Creature in Heaven or Earth was able to reveal them, the great Meſſiah of *Judah*'s Tribe, and the Root of *David*, has interpoſed between him and the Church, and has taken the Book of divine Decrees, by the Father's Grant, into his Hand, and has looſed the Seals thereof, to lay them open, and to fulfil them in their Seaſon. He is worthy of the moſt grateful Acknowledgements and Honours on his own Account, and on account of his meritorious Death, whereby he, as Mediator, obtained Authority for this important Work. How awful and Majeſtic is his Character, as a *Lion* to tear his Enemies to Pieces, and defend his People from their Rage againſt them! And how endearing, as a *Lamb* for Meekneſs, that was led to the Slaughter, and died a Sacrifice to ſatisfy divine Juſtice for them, whom he redeemed by his precious Blood as a peculiar People, and has dignified with the Honour of Kings and Prieſts to God, in Diſtinction from the reſt of Mankind, throughout the World, of what Nation, or Kindred after the Fleſh, ſoever they be! O the divine Adorations and Worſhip, and Songs of Praiſe, that are and ought to be offered to him, together with God the Father, by all his miniſtring Servants, and the whole Church! The innumerable Company of Angels delight to join with them, in aſcribing all Bleſſing, Honour, Glory and Power equally to him that ſits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb, as the ſame God with him, and as ſuſtaining their proper Parts in the Oeconomy of Salvation, that they may be jointly glorified for ever. May all Creatures in Heaven and Earth concur herein, and cheerfully ſay, *Amen!*

CHAP. VI.

The Apoſtle goes on to an Account of the Opening of the Seals, in their Order; for revealing the Purpoſes of God, that are to be fulfilled by his Providence in ſeven grand ſucceſſive Periods; the firſt of which is repreſented in the Opening of the ſix firſt Seals, and relates to the State of the Church under the Heathen-Emperors of Rome, *from the Time of this Prophecy to* Conſtantine *the Great, about the Year of our Lord* 323.—*The firſt Seal is opened, relating to the glorious Succeſs of the Goſpel in the firſt Promulgation of it,* 1, 2. *The ſecond, relating to a great Deſtruction both of perſecuting* Jews *and* Romans, *by their Wars one with another, till about the Year* 138, 3, 4. *The third, relating to great Scarcity of Proviſions in the Empire, between the Year* 138 *and* 179, 5, 6. *The fourth, relating to great Mortality by a Peſtilence, between the Year* 211 *and* 241, 7, 8. *The fifth, relating to the Cry of the Souls of Martyrs under the Altar,* 9—11. *And the ſixth, relating to the dreadful and total Subverſion of the Empire, as Heathen, in the Reign of* Conſtantine, *about the Year* 323, 12—17.

PERIOD I.

TEXT.

1 *AND I ſaw when the the Lamb opened one*

PARAPHRASE.

SEAL I.] 1. NOW to give an Account in Order of the ſeveral Prophecies contained in the ſealed Book, as they gradually appeared in the Opening of each Part

of the Seals, and I heard, as it were, the Noise of Thunder, one of the four Beasts, saying, Come, and see.

Part of it; Upon the Delivery of this Book or Roll into the Hand of Christ, who appeared under the Representation of a Lamb, I saw, in my Vision, that he soon began with opening the *first* of the Seals, to discover the Prophecies contained in the Part which was then unroll'd; and I immediately heard an exceeding strong Voice, as loud as Thunder, which was distinctly pronounced by the *first* of the four living Creatures, or Representatives of the Ministers of the Church, who appeared like a Lion; (*Chap.* iv. 7.) and he summon'd my Attention, saying to me, Draw nigh hither, and behold what offers to View in this Part of the Roll, which is now unfolded.

2 *And I saw, and behold, a white Horse: And he that sat on him had a Bow; and a Crown was given unto him: And he went forth conquering, and to conquer.*

2. And having come so near as to be able to discern what was in it, I looked, and, behold, a *white* Horse appeared, the Emblem of Joy and Triumph, and of the Purity of the Gospel, and of all divine Proceedures: And the illustrious Person, even the Lord Jesus himself, who sat upon it, like a mighty Warrior riding prosperously, was figured out to my View as having a Bow in his Hand, like what is used in Battle for shooting Arrows, a fit Emblem of the Power of his Word and Spirit, which penetrates as deep as sharp Arrows into the Hearts of his Enemies, either to slay them before him, or to make them a willing People in the Day of his Power: (*Ps.* xlv. 5, and cx. 3.) And a glorious Crown was set upon his Head, the Emblem of his Royal Dignity and Victory, *who for the Suffering of Death is crowned with Glory and Honour.* (Heb. ii. 9.) And he march'd forth in a triumphant Manner, immediately beginning to conquer, and carrying on his Conquests, till they should be completed to the Joy of his People, and the Confusion of his implacable Enemies; * Which might point to the wonderful Success of the Gospel in its spreading far and wide through the *Roman*-Empire, unto the Conversion of vast Multitudes of Sinners, especially from among the idolatrous *Gentiles*, and the defeating of all Opposition to it, in the first Age of Christianity, when its Preachers went forth with Strength and Speed, like Horses, to propagate it every where under Christ, who rode in Triumph on their Ministrations, as a Specimen of what should be done in

* Mr. *Joseph Mede* and Sir *Isaac Newton*, with others, suppose that the first *four* Seals relate intirely to the *Judgments*, that were executed on the *Roman*-Empire; and that the Prophecies concerning *the* Affairs of the *Church* don't come in till the *fifth* Seal; and that Christ's *riding on the white Horse, conquering and to conquer*, is emblematical of Victories obtained to the Destruction of his Enemies.—But, methinks, riding on a *white Horse* don't seem to be a proper Emblem of *only* the same Sort of *terrible Slaughter* of Christ's Enemies, as under the very next Seal is represented by a Rider on a *red Horse*; and it seems somewhat unaccountable, that the surprizing Progress of the Gospel by the Preaching of the Apostles, which, according to Sir *Isaac*'s Scheme, was mostly after this Vision, especially among the idolatrous *Gentiles*, should be taken no Notice of at the Beginning of a Revelation, in which the Church was so nearly concerned. But it was exceeding proper, and tended greatly to their Comfort, to represent the Judgments of God, in the Opening of the three next Seals, that should fall upon those, who should furiously set themselves against the Gospel, after he had so signally owned and blessed it.

after Ages, till the whole Number of his Elect shall be gathered in, and all his Enemies shall be made his Footstool, (1 *Cor*. xv. 25, and *Heb*. i. 13.)

3 And when he had opened the second Seal, I heard the second Beast say, Come, and see.

SEAL II.] 3. And when I saw in my Vision that Jesus, the glorious Lamb, had opened the *second* Seal to discover the next Part of the Roll, I heard the Voice of the *second* of the four living Creatures, or Representatives of Gospel-Ministers, which appeared to me like an Ox or Calf, (*Chap*. iv. 7.) calling upon me, and saying, in like Manner as the first had done, Come hither, and see what presents itself in the Part of the Roll, which is now unfolded, relating to the next succeeding Event of Providence.

4 And there went out another Horse that was *red: And* Power *was given to him that sat thereon to take Peace from the Earth, and that they should kill one another: And there was given unto him a great Sword.*

4. And, upon my drawing near, I saw a Representation of another Horse, whose Colour was as *red*, as if he had been all over stained with Blood, a proper Emblem of dreadful War and Bloodshed: And the Rider of this Horse was represented as an Agent of Providence * to spread Confusion and Slaughter among the persecuting Inhabitants of the Earth, to the Destruction of their Tranquillity and Safety; and to do this by Means of his throwing one Party of them into a State of War with the other, that they might slay one another: And, as a further Emblem of this righteous Judgment of God upon them, a huge formidable Sword was put into the Hand of the Warrior, who sat upon the red Horse: All which may be considered as a Prediction of the dreadful Destruction of infidel *Jews* and *Romans*, those common Enemies to Christianity, in the Wars between them, especially in the Reigns of *Trajan* and *Adrian*; till about the Year of our Lord 138, which was a righteous Judgment upon those joint-Persecuters.

5 And when he had opened the third Seal, I heard the third Beast say, Come, and see. And I beheld, and lo, a black Horse: And he that sat on him had a Pair of Balances in his Hand.

SEAL III.] 5. And when the Lamb had loosed the *third* Seal, and so laid open the next Part of the Roll, I heard the Voice of the *third* of the living Creatures, or Representatives of Ministers, which appeared with a Face like a Man, (*Chap*. iv. 7.) saying to me, as the two former had before, Come near, and see what is contained in this unfolded Part of the Roll, relating to the next remarkable Event of Providence; and, looking into it, I observed the Representation of another Horse of a *black* Colour, a fit Emblem of Mourning and Affliction, by reason of great Distress: Accordingly, he, who appeared as mounted upon this Horse, had the Figure of a Pair of Scales in his Hand, † to

* It is hard to determine, whether *the Rider* on the *red Horse* be meant immediately of Christ, or of such Instruments as he made Use of, who is *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*, (Chap. xix 16.) But, be that as it will, If this Vision of the *second* Seal was (as is most commonly thought) in the Time of *Domitian*'s Persecution, about the Year of our Lord 96, (Vid. *Mill*. Proleg. p. 10.) it may very fairly be referred to the vast Numbers of both *Jews* and *Romans*, that fell by the Wars between them in *Trajan*'s and *Adrian*'s Reigns, about 40 Years after the Vision. (See Mr. *Lowman*'s History of this Seal.)

† Some consider *the Pair of Balances*, as an Emblem of *Piety*, and of *strict and impartial Justice*, which was administer'd in the Reigns of *Severus* and his Son *Alexander*. But it rather appears to me, than

to weigh the Corn, that should be sold at an excessive Price, as in a Time of great Scarcity next to a Famine; (See *Levit.* xxvi. 26, *Lam.* v. 10, and *Ezek.* iv. 16.) Which may be considered as pointing to a great Want of Provisions; and was another Judgment upon the Heathen-Empire for persecuting the Christians under the Reigns of the two *Antonines*, between the Year 138 and 179.

6 And I heard a Voice in the Midst of the four Beasts say, A Measure of Wheat for a Penny, and three Measures of Barley for a Penny; and see thou hurt not the Oil and the Wine.

6. And to explain the Meaning of this symbolical Representation, I heard a Proclamation among the four living Creatures, saying, So great will be the Scarcity of Bread at this Time, that one small Measure of Wheat, no more than is sufficient for a single Day's Sustenance for one Man, shall be sold at the extravagant Price of a *Roman* Penny; and three such little Measures of Barley, which makes the coarsest Bread, shall cost the same: † And, as a further Token of the Scarcity of other Provisions, an Order was added to take heed, that no Injury be done to the Olive Trees and Vines, lest they utterly fail of producing Oil and Wine for the Refreshment of the Rich, as Bread is of the Poor; and so the Famine become in a Manner total.

7 And when he had opened the fourth Seal, I heard the Voice of the fourth Beast say, Come, and see.

SEAL. IV.] 7. And when the Lamb proceeded to open the *fourth* Seal, and unfolded the next Part of the Roll, I heard the Voice of the *fourth* of the living Creatures, or Representatives of Gospel-Ministers, which appeared with a Face like an Eagle's, (*Chap.* iv. 7.) calling to me and saying, Come near, and see what this exhibits to your Sight.

8 And I looked, and behold a pale Horse: And his Name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And Power was given unto them, over the fourth Part of the Earth to kill with Sword, and with Hunger, and with Death, and with the Beasts of the Earth.

8. And having drawn near, and looked upon it in my Vision, I beheld a Representation of another Horse, whose Colour was as pale and ghastly as a dead Corps, a fit Emblem of Death, which ravaged in various Forms through the *Roman*-Empire, in Executions of Judgments upon them that persecuted the Church of Christ: Accordingly there appeared an Inscription of the Name of the Rider of this Horse, intimating that he was the King of Terrors, called *Death*; and in his Train there was a Representation of the Grave, and of the separate State, (ᾅδης) into which the departed Souls of the wicked immediately enter to be cast into Hell, which may be stiled *the second Death.* (Chap. xx. 6, 14.) And I saw that Commission was given to these for-

that it is here to be taken as an Emblem of *Affliction*, in a Way of Judgment upon the Heathen-persecuting Empire, according to the Purport of the next foregoing and following Seals, and according to the most natural Construction of the Emblem of a *black Horse*; and the Interpretation of it in the next Verse seems to confirm this Sense. (See *Ibid*'s History of the Scarcity of Provisions in the Reigns of the *Antonines*, which began about the Year of our Lord 138, and ended about 179.)

† *A Measure of Wheat* (χοῖνιξ σίτου) is variously computed: But, if *Grotius*'s Account from *Herodotus*, *Hipocrates*, *Diogenes Laertius*, and *Athenæus* may be depended upon, it is no more than one Man in Health needs for the Allowance of every Day. And a *Penny*, which was about seven-pence half-penny of our Money, was as much as a Labourer could earn in a Day, as appears from *Matth.* xx. 2. (Vid. *Grot.* in loc.)—Several Senses, very contrary to one another, have been put upon *Hurt not the Oil and the Wine*; but that given in the Paraphrase, which for aught I know is singular, appears most agreeable to what I take to be the Meaning of the former Part of the Verse.

midable

midable Instruments of divine Wrath, to make dreadful Havoc in the Destruction of vast Multitudes upon one fourth or a considerable Part of the *Roman*-Empire, that extended to the greatest Extent of all the known Regions of the Earth; which Judgments were to be excuted in cutting off some by the Sword of War; and others, according to God's Threatnings to sinful and idolatrous Nations, (*Ezek.* v. 17, and xiv. 21, and xxxiii. 27.) by a pining Famine; and others by a sweeping Pestilence; and others by the Fury of wild Beasts of the Fields to devour them; so that they which escaped one, should fall by another of these four heavy Calamities, and find no Place of Security against them. * All which may be considered as fulfilled upon the idolatrous *Heathen*-Persecutors of the Church under several Emperors, whose Severities began about the Year 211, and continued, with little Intermission, till about the Year 241.

9 *And when he had opened the fifth Seal, I saw under the Altar the Souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the Testimony which they held.*

SEAL V.] 9. And when the Lamb had taken off the *fifth* Seal, to disclose the Things contained in that Part of the Roll, which was then opened, I saw in my Vision an affecting Representation of Martyrs, that had been slain in the then present, as well as former Persecutions, whose Souls, surviving their dead Bodies, appeared to me in Allusion to Temple-Service, † as prostrating themselves at the Foot of the golden Altar of Incense within the Sanctuary; a proper Emblem to signify, that the Offering, which they had made of themselves even unto Death, for their faithful and professed Subjection to the Gospel of Christ, and for the noble Witness, they had bore to him with Constancy and Perseverance to the End, was highly acceptable to God, through the Odour of his Intercession.

10 *And they cried with a loud Voice, say-*

10. And, methought, they in an humble and devotional Manner cried out, with great Fervency and Earnestness,

* The Emperors *Maximinus*, *Decius*, *Gallus* and *Volusian*, and *Valerian* were cruel Persecutors of the Christians; and in their Days the Empire was punish'd, not only with the *Sword* and *Famine* or Scarcity, as under the two former Seals, but also with *the Pestilence*, which is signified by *Death*, (Jer. ix. 21.) and was distinguished from those other Judgments, as in the Passages referr'd to in the Paraphrase. And it has been observed, that *War* brings on *Scarcity*; and *Scarcity* Pestilence for Want of proper Sustenance; and *Pestilence*, by depopulating the Country, leaves the few Survivors an easier Prey to the *wild Beasts*; and so these Judgments have a natural Tendency to make Way, one for another, in the Order in which they are here represented. And their reaching *the fourth* or a considerable *Part of the Earth* is expressed in the Paraphrase so indeterminately, as to leave Room for applying it, either to a fourth Part of the *Subjects*; or of the *Dominion* of the *Roman*-Empire, which, I think, is meant by the *Earth* or *World* in several Parts of the New Testament, and in this prophetic Book, (Chap. iii. 10.) where *the whole World*, and *they that dwell on the Earth*, are synonimous Terms, as they also are *Rom.* x. 18, compared with *Matth.* xxiv. 14; and probably *the Earth* signifies the *Roman*-Empire, *ver.* 4. of this Chapter.

† As the Scene of this Vision was *in Heaven*, (Chap. iv. 1.) *the Souls under the Altar* seem to be an Allusion, not (as some think) to the Blood of the Sacrifices that was poured out at the Foot of the brazen Altar, which stood in a Court without the Temple; but to their being before *the Altar of Incense*, which was within the Sanctuary; and so intimates, that the Blood of these Martyrs was not to be considered as propitiatory Sacrifices; but as Offerings of a spiritual Nature, like the Prayers of *Israel* before the golden Altar at the Time of Incense, that they might be perfumed by the Intercession of Christ to recommend the Persons and Prayers, and religious Services and Sufferings of his People to divine Acceptance.

ing, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our Blood on them that dwell on the Earth?

O Lord, who art of *purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity*, and art faithful to thy Promises to thy People, and true to thy Threatnings against thine Enemies, How long will it be e'er thou, in the Course of thy Providence, wilt glorify thy Holiness and Justice, and vindicate the Honour of thine own Name, by reckoning with, and taking suitable Vengeance upon, those implacable persecuting Enemies, who, through thy great Patience, dwell on the Earth, and have shed our Blood for our stedfast Adherence to thee and thy Cause? When shall the Time come for thy putting a Stop to their Rage, and bringing Confusion upon their wicked Designs, that they may no longer go on to murder thy Saints and Servants, for Righteousness Sake.

11 *And white Robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little Season, until their Fellow-Servants also, and their Brethren that should be killed as they* were, *should be fulfilled.*

11. And hereupon they appeared, in Token of Acceptance with God, as clothed with glorious shining Garments, the Emblems of Purity, Honour and Joy, even Robes of Righteousness, which were put upon every one of them by the free Favour of God: And, in Answer to their humble Enquiry with respect to the Destruction of persecuting Enemies, and the Deliverance of the Church from their Rage on Earth, they were told that they must wait with Quietness, and Hope about it, a little longer, till the Number of faithful Martyrs should be fulfilled, by the Testimony, which others of their Fellow-Christians and Brethren were also to bear to Christ and his Cause, and seal with their Blood, as they themselves had done before; and then the Troubles of the Church from *Heathen*-Enemies should intirely cease, and issue in a State of Prosperity and Peace: Herein referring most immediately to the sharp, though short Persecution under *Dioclesian*, which was the last that should be inflicted by the *Pagan*-Empire; and should be brought to its final Period by *Constantine* the Great's obtaining the imperial Dignity, and surmounting all Opposition in his Victory over *Licinius* about the Year 323.

12 *And I beheld when he had opened the sixth Seal, and lo, there was a great Earthquake; and the Sun became black as Sackcloth of Hair, and the Moon became as Blood.*

Seal VI.] 12. Accordingly when the Lamb had broke open the *Sixth* Seal, and exposed that Part to View which was before unrolled, I looked, and beheld a Representation of the most terrible and shocking Confusion, as though all Nature were in the strongest Convulsion, just ready to be dissolved. It seemed to me, as if the whole terrestrial Globe rock'd and trembled, and were shaking to Pieces by a universal Earthquake; and as if all the Brightness of the Sun in the Firmament were turned into the thickest Darkness, and into such a doleful Mourning, as uses to be expressed by one's being clothed with a Garment of coarse Sackcloth made of the blackest Hair; and as if the Moon had lost all its Light, and were turned into a horrid Gloom, as red as Blood.

13 *And the Stars of Heaven fell upon the Earth, even as a*

13. And, methought, I saw the Stars tumble down to the Earth from their Places in Heaven, with as much Precipitancy, as blighted or immature Figs are blown down,

Figtree casteth her untimely Figs, when she is shaken of a mighty Wind.

from their Trees to the Ground, when beat upon by a violent Storm of Wind.

14 *And the Heaven departed as a Scroll when it is rolled together; and every Mountain and Island were mov'd out of their Places.*

14. And, in this figurative Representation, I beheld the whole Face of the Firmament removed out of its Place, and no more expanded than if it had been rolled up together, like a huge Sheet of Parchment, and intirely rolled away; and all the Mountains and Islands of the Earth appeared at the same Time, as thrown down and destroy'd, never to be seen any more: All which signified the absolute irrecoverable Overthrow of the *Heathen*-State, and Power of the persecuting *Roman*-Empire, together with the whole Frame of its ecclesiastical Constitution, from the highest to the lowest Degrees and Orders of People in it, when *Constantine* the Great mounted the Throne; destroy'd the Pagan-Temples, that were often built on Mountains; abolish'd Idolatry and idolatrous Priests on the Islands, as well as on the Continent; and changed the whole Empire from its *Heathen* to the *Christian*-Form of Government. This grand and surprising Revolution was represented to me in a like emblematical Manner, as the Destruction of the Enemies of the Church were, by the antient Prophets, under the strong and striking Figures of an Earthquake, of darkning the Sun and Moon, of the falling of the Stars, and rolling the Heavens together as a Scroll, and removing the Earth out of its Place; and as the Destruction of *Jerusalem* had been described by our blessed Lord. (See *Isa.* xiii. 9—19, and xxiv. 23, and xxxiv. 4, *Ezek.* xxxii. 7, 8, *Hag.* ii. 21, 22, and *Matth.* xxiv. 29.)

15 *And the Kings of the Earth, and the great Men, and the rich Men, and the chief Captains, and the mighty Men, and every Bond-man, and every Free-man hid themselves in the Dens, and in the Rocks of the Mountains;*

15. And such was the terrible Fright and Consternation of all Ranks and Degrees of *Heathen*-Idolators and Persecutors at this doleful *Catastrophe*, and at the heavy Punishment thereby inflicted upon them, that those of the highest Authority, even the Emperors or Chief Rulers of the Earth, who exercised Royal Dominion in the Empire; and the Nobles, Magistrates and Governors of Provinces, and all the principal Men in Authority; and the richest Subjects of the Empire; and the most bold and daring Soldiers and Commanders of Armies; and Men of the most undaunted Courage that feared nothing before; and People of lower Rank, whether Servants or Masters, Slaves or free Citizens; Persons of all Characters ran about in wild Despair, seeking, if possible, to find some retiring Place, as they had formerly forced the Christians to do, in obscure Caves of the Earth, and in the Clefts and Holes of cragged Rocks, or on the Tops of Mountains; and so *the Loftiness* of all Sorts *of Men was bowed down, and their Haughtiness made low*, as was prophesied of those, whose *Idols should be abolished* in the Days of the Messiah's Kingdom: (*Isa.* ii. 17—21) And this may be consider'd as a strong and lively Prefiguration of the still

 more

more dreadful Confusion and Dismay, that will seize all graceless Sinners, of every Character, at the Day of the final Judgment and Dissolution of all Things.

16 And said to the Mountains and Rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the Face of him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb:

16. And, amidst all this Terror and Anguish, they, like the *Israelites*, when God punished them for their Idolatry, (*Hos.* x. 8) wished, and called in vain for Mountains and Rocks to tumble down upon their Heads, and overwhelm and crush them to Death, if by this Means they might possibly be shelter'd and hid from the Presence of the incensed God, who, as Sovereign of the Universe, was represented as sitting upon the Throne; and from the righteous Vengeance of the Lord Jesus, for the furious Opposition they had made to him and his Cause, and for the Cruelties they had exercised upon his Members, whose just Resentments, though *a Lamb* for Meekness, were now kindled against them, and whom they provoked to act the Part of the *Lion of the Tribe of* Judah, (*Chap.* v. 5) by *tearing them in Pieces*, when *there was none to deliver them.* (Pf. l. 22.)

17 For the great Day of his Wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

17. For they found, by woful Experience, that the signal threatned Day of Christ's terrible Justice was then come in its severest Executions; and therefore, under a Sense of Guilt, they cried out with bitter Agony, Horror and Despair, Who of us all shall be able to escape, resist, or bear the fiery Indignation, that now comes forth to devour us?

RECOLLECTIONS.

How glorious are the Triumphs of the Gospel, when Christ rides forth upon it, with all-conquering Strength, to subdue his Enemies, and make a willing People to himself! And yet how many are the Trials of Faith and Patience, that he suffers his Followers to undergo, even unto Death, for their Fidelity to him! But they need not be dismay'd or discouraged at them; for in a little Time the Cry of their Blood shall be heard, and God will avenge himself on their persecuting Enemies.—In what a dangerous State are the Opposers of Christ and his Gospel! They are liable to be cut off from the Earth by terrible Judgments, such as War, Famine, Pestilence, and every Kind of violent Death. And ah! the Consternation, Horror and Dismay, that will pierce their guilty Souls, when the whole Frame of this World shall be dissolved, and the great Day of Wrath shall come! Then all Ranks and Orders among them, from the greatest Monarch to the meanest Peasant, and the most bold and daring of them all, shall tremble before the great God, and the provoked Lamb; and they would rather have Rocks and Mountains fall on them to crush them to Death, and, if possible, into an Annihilation, than feel the Terrors of divine Vengeance, which they can neither escape, nor bear. But O the unspeakable Happiness of the Saints after all their Troubles, which shall soon have an End! Though Men may kill their Bodies, they cannot kill their Souls; but they shall go to God, and find Acceptance with him through the Blood of Jesus, and shall be clothed with illustrious Robes of spotless Purity, and immortal Honour and Delight: And when the Number of holy Martyrs and Sufferers for Christ shall be completed, and their Testimony to him be finished, they shall join the glorious Multitude that are already in Heaven, and be ever with the Lord.

CHAP. VII.

A Pause between the two first grand Periods, represents a short Respite from Persecution, for the Comfort of the Saints, from about the Year 323 *to* 337, 1—3. *And their Peace, Happiness and Safety, as signified by an Angel's sealing* 144000, 4—8. *A Chorus of the whole Church, with which the holy Angels join in a Song of Praise on this joyful Occasion,* 9—12. *And one of the Elders informs the Apostle of the unspeakable Blessedness and Glory of those that suffered Martyrdom for Christ,* 13—17.

TEXT.

1 *AND after these Things, I saw four Angels standing on the four Corners of the Earth, holding the four Winds of the Earth, that the Wind should not blow on the Earth, nor on the Sea, nor on any Tree.*

2 *And I saw another Angel ascending from the East, having the Seal of the living God. And he cried*

PARAPHRASE.

1. AND after the View I was favoured with of the Things discovered by the opening of the *first six* Seals, relating to the Destruction of the *Heathen*, idolatrous *Roman*-Power, I had another Vision, in which I beheld four Angels, or Messengers, that were to be the Instruments of Providence for executing Judgments in due Season on the *Roman*-Empire, after it had publickly embraced *Christianity*: They appeared to me as standing at the utmost Bounds of the northern, eastern, western, and southern Parts of the Earth, and as detaining the four Winds, which blow from those cardinal Points *, that none of them, as yet, might rise and spread malignant Influence upon the Inhabitants of the Continent, or of the Islands in the Sea, or upon the Fruits of the Ground: Thereby intimating, that as the Judgments of God are compared to *Winds*, (Jer. xlix. 36, 37, and li. 1, 2) and to pernicious Doctrines (*Eph.* iv. 14, and *Jude* ver. 12.) so their being held back was an Emblem to signify that, for the present, there should be a calm and peaceful State of the Church and Empire, free from Commotions and Disturbances by any gross Errors on one hand, or Oppressions and desolating Judgments on the other: Which may be consider'd as taking Place, for a few Years, after Christianity was established by *Constantine* the Great, and became the Religion of the *Roman*-Empire, which continued in a peaceful State, during his Life, from about the Year 323 to the Year 337.

2, 3. And, to shew that this Restraint was to be only for a little while, I beheld another Angel, or divine Messenger, of superior Authority, coming up from the eastern Quarter with an Emblem of the highest Honour, and Power, signified by his having the Seal of the only living

* It is most commonly agreed, that *the Winds* here mentioned are Emblems of divine Judgments; but *the Earth, Sea and Trees* are variously interpreted with great Uncertainty, according to different Conjectures of Expositors. The general Sense is more easily apprehended, while they are consider'd as Things, that are exposed to Injuries by tempestuous Winds; and I know not, whether any Thing more particular be *certainly* intended; but, if it be, what is suggested in the Paraphrase bids as fair for it, in my Thoughts, as any other Conjecture.

with a loud Voice to the four Angels, to whom it was given to hurt the Earth and the Sea,

and true God †; and he cried with sovereign Authority, great Earnestness and Compassion for his People, and with a strong Voice, loud enough to be heard at the most distant Parts of the Earth by the other four Angels, that had received a Commission to execute Judgment in God's Time and Way, according to his Will, upon all Ranks and Degrees of People; saying to them, Stay your Hands for a Season, and execute no Judgments on any Part of the Empire, till we, who are authorised, in our different Order, to take Care of the Saints and Servants of our Covenant-God, have put a Seal upon them for distinguishing, preserving and appropriating them, as a peculiar People to him, and for making them as evidently known to be so, as if they were visibly marked on their Foreheads, in Token of his owning and sparing them; as the sprinkling of the Blood of the Pascal Lamb on the Door-Posts of the Children of *Israel*, and the Mark order'd to be set on the Foreheads of those that cried and sighed for the Abominations in the Midst of *Jerusalem*, were the Tokens, by which they were to be saved from the Judgments that were to fall upon others. (*Exod.* xii. 12, 13, 23, and *Ezek.* ix. 4—6.) By this was intimated that the terrible Desolations, and pestilential Heresies, which were to be denounced by the *seven Trumpets* under the *seventh Seal*, as to be executed upon the Romish Antichristian-Empire, should be deferred for a while, till in that Interim many Converts should be brought to serve the Lord in Spirit and Truth, and to make a free and open Profession of his Name, and should be taken into his special Favour and Protection.

3 *Saying, Hurt not the Earth, neither the Sea, nor the Trees, till we have sealed the Servants of our God in their Foreheads.*

4 *And I heard the Number of them which were sealed:* And there were *sealed an hundred* and *forty* and *four Thousand, of all*

4. And hereupon, methought, I heard a Declaration of the Number, that were thus distinguishingly mark'd and appropriated to the Lord; and they, who were thus evidently set apart for him, and perfectly known to him, were figuratively expressed by One Hundred and Forty-four Thousand, a large *determinate* put for an *indeterminate* Num-

† This *other Angel* seems to have been *Christ* himself, who is spoken of as a *mighty Angel*, (Chap. x. 1) and the *Angel of God's Presence*, (Isa. lxiii. 9) and is called, by Way of Eminence, *his Angel that bears his Name*, and *the Angel* or *Messenger of the Covenant*; (Exod. xxiii. 20—23, and Malac. iii. 1) and who rose as the *Sun of Righteousness*, and the *Day-spring from on High*, (Malac. iv, 2, and Luke i. 78) and came from *Judea*, the *eastern* Part of the *Roman*-Empire. He appeared with an eminent Ensign of Honour, as having the *Seal of the living God* upon himself, with Power to seal his Servants; and spoke with the Authority of a God in commanding the other four Angels to refrain from Executions of Judgments, till he had done this important Work in favour of his Church. Now, to whom can all this be so properly applied, as to Christ himself? He is the Head and Lord of all the Angels, and is in his Office-Capacity sealed by God the Father; (*John* vi. 27) and he only, together with the Father and Spirit, *knows his Sheep*, or *those that are his*; (John x. 14, and 2 Tim. ii. 19) and so he only, exclusive of all Creatures, had a certain Knowledge of them, and sufficient Power and Authority to seal them with his Holy Spirit, whereby he marks, distinguishes and secures them unto the Day of Redemption. (*Eph.* iv. 30.) And as in sealing those that belong to him, he acts in the Character of *Mediator*, and makes use of Gospel-Ministers, in that Work, he is fitly represented as *an Angel*, and they may be supposed to be included, in a subservient Way of Operation, with himself, when he said, *Hurt not the Earth, &c. till we have sealed the Servants of our God in their Foreheads.* (ver. 3.)

ber,

tho Tribes of the Children of Israel.

ber, as multiplied by *Twelve*, a Square Root, and then by a *Thousand*, to be an Emblem of all the Chosen and Called of God in that Age, who were reserved to him, and built upon Christ, the Foundation which was laid in the Doctrine of the twelve Apostles, and who should make a brave and bold Profession of the pure Gospel in the Christian-Church, consisting of *Gentile*, as well as *Jewish* Believers, which were his truely spiritual *Israel*, and spoken of as such, in Allusion to the *twelve* faithful *Tribes*, that sprang from *Jacob*, who, on his having Power with God, was called *Israel*; (Gen. xxxii. 28) and whose Posterity were the true and visible Church, according to God's Covenant with *Abraham*. (Gen. xvii. 7—9.)

5 *Of the Tribe of Juda* were *sealed twelve Thousand. Of the Tribe of Reuben* were sealed *twelve Thousand. Of the Tribe of Gad* were sealed *twelve Thousand.*

6 *Of the Tribe of Aser* were sealed *twelve Thousand. Of the Tribe of Nephthalim* were sealed *twelve Thousand. Of the Tribe of Manasses* were sealed *twelve Thousand.*

7 *Of the Tribe of Simeon* were sealed *twelve Thousand. Of the Tribe of Levi* were sealed *twelve Thousand. Of the Tribe of Issachar* were sealed *twelve Thousand.*

8 *Of the Tribe of Zabulon* were sealed *twelve Thousand. Of the Tribe of Joseph* were sealed *twelve Thousand. Of the Tribe of Benjamin* were sealed *twelve Thousand.*

5, 6, 7, 8. Of these there were sealed twelve Thousand, as if so many were reckoned to the Tribe of *Judah*, from which our Lord in his human Nature sprang, and which therefore has the Honour of being first referred to. In like Manner twelve Thousand were sealed, as if reckoned to the Tribe of *Reuben*, *Jacob*'s eldest Son, though by his Iniquity he lost the Honour and Privilege of the First-born, which were transferred to *Judah*. Twelve Thousand more were sealed, as if reckoned to the Tribe of *Gad*. Twelve Thousand more were sealed, as if reckoned to the Tribe of *Asher*. Twelve Thousand more were sealed, as if reckoned to the Tribe of *Naphthali*. Twelve Thousand more were sealed, as if reckoned to the Tribe of *Manasseh*. Twelve Thousand more were sealed, as if reckoned to the Tribe of *Simeon*. Twelve Thousand more were sealed, as if reckoned to the Tribe of *Levi*. Twelve Thousand more were sealed, as if reckoned to the Tribe of *Issachar*. Twelve Thousand more were sealed, as if reckoned to the Tribe of *Zebulon*. Twelve Thousand more were sealed, as if reckoned to the Tribe of *Joseph*, one of the darling Sons of *Jacob*. And twelve Thousand more were sealed, as if reckoned to the Tribe of *Benjamin*, his other chief favourite Son. All these make up together one Hundred and forty-four Thousand; in which Account of them, the Tribes of *Dan* and *Ephraim* are passed by, as having been Ring-leaders of Idolatry, (*Judg.* xviii. 30, 31, 1 *King.* xii. 28—30, and *Hos.* iv. 17.) and so not fit to bear a Part in the Emblems of the pure Church of Christ: But, in their Stead, the Reckoning refers to the Tribe of *Levi*, though they had no Inheritance with the rest in the Land of *Israel*; (Numb. xviii. 24. and Josh. xiii. 33.) and to the Tribe of *Joseph*, the eldest of *Jacob's* most beloved Sons, to whose two Sons *Jacob* gave such a Blessing, as might constitute them Heads of distinct Tribes. (*Gen.* xlviii. 14—20.)

9 *After this I beheld, and lo, a great*

9. After this Vision of the peaceful and prosperous State of those on Earth, that were faithful to Christ, and marked

Multitude, which no Man could number, of all Nations, and Kindreds, and People, and Tongues, stood before the Throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white Robes, and Palms in their Hands;

out as a peculiar People, † I had another Vision of the glorious State of the Church triumphant in Heaven, to encourage and comfort me and all sincere Believers, against the greatest Violence of Persecution, that would follow the Conversion of the *Roman*-Empire in succeeding Ages of Anti-christian Tyranny and Idolatry: And I beheld, with Admiration and Transports of Joy, a vast Multitude, which, though distinctly known to God, and comparatively speaking, but a *Remnant* and *little Flock*; yet absolutely, and in itself considered, is so great as to exceed the Power of any Creature to cast up, and give their Sum total, as they are collected together in consequence of their having been redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb, (*Chap.* v. 9.) out of all Nations, and Families, and Kindreds, and People of different Languages, wheresoever they were scattered through the Earth. These stood with holy Boldness and full Acceptance before the Throne of Glory, and before Jesus Christ, who appeared as a Lamb that had been slain, (*Chap.* v. 6, 12.) to recommend them to the divine Favour by his Merit and Mediation; and they were arrayed with illustrious Robes of Righteousness, the Emblems of Honour and Acceptance, Purity and sublime Pleasure; and carried Palm-Branches in their Hands, the Tokens of Victory and Triumph, Joy and Praise, like the *Hosannahs* that were sung by the *Jews* at their Feast of Tabernacles. (See the Paraphrase and Note on *Matth.* xxi. 9.)

10 *And cried with a loud Voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb.*

10. And they lifted up their Voices with zealous, loud and cheerful Acclamations, saying, We ascribe all the Glory, not only of our happy and complete Deliverance from the Severities of Persecutions; but from all the Evil of Sin and Sorrow on Earth, and of deserved Wrath and Ruin in Hell; and we give the Glory of our Advancement to all the Dignity and Blessedness of Heaven, intirely and alone to our gracious, reconciled and Covenant-God and Father, who sits with august Majesty on his imperial Throne,

† The former Vision of the 144000 that were sealed, I apprehend to be a Representation of the State of the true Church *on Earth*, for a little Interval then coming on, as consisting not merely of the natural Seed of *Israel*, the Converts from which were not so numerous at that Time; but of *Jews* and *Gentiles* together, though it be figuratively expressed by sealing those of the twelve Tribes of *Israel*. But this following Vision, as I take it, is of the Church triumphant *in Heaven*, consisting of all true Believers of all Nations, that either had, or ever should suffer Martyrdom for their Fidelity to Christ: For it relates to their glorious and blessed State, in its utmost Purity and Perfection, *after* they shall have got through their Tribulations, *when God will dwell among them, and wipe away all Tears from their Eyes*, (ver. 15—17.) which in this prophetic Book is, I think, descriptive of the *heavenly State*; (Chap. xxi. 3, 4.) And indeed all the Expressions here used are too strong and magnificent to be applied to any State of the Church on Earth; unless we suppose, with some, that it relates to the *Millenium*. But the distant Prospect of the Time, when that should be, seems not so well suited to support the Faith and Patience of suffering Saints in the approaching and succeeding Ages, (which is the evident Intention of this Prophecy) as a Representation of their still more glorious Dignity and Triumph in Heaven, to which they shall be admitted, *immediately* after their Tribulations on Earth, in their several Ages, till the whole Number of them shall be compleated; when a Chorus of all the holy Angels shall join their Songs, *ver.* 11: And all the innumerable Company of Angels can scarce be thought to leave their Habitation *in Heaven*, and come down to live a thousand Years with the Saints *on Earth*; nor is any Hint of that Kind given in the Description of the *Millenium-Glory*.

and is the original Contriver, Appointer and Giver of all Salvation; and to the great Redeemer, who was ſlain, as a Lamb offered in Sacrifice to expiate our Sins, and procure that Salvation which is in him with eternal Glory.

11 *And all the Angels ſtood round about the Throne, and* about *the Elders, and the four Beaſts, and fell before the Throne on their Faces, and worſhipped God,*

12 *Saying, Amen: Bleſſing, and Glory, and Wiſdom, and Thankſgiving, and Honour, and Power, and Might,* be *unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.*

11, 12. And, methought, the whole Hoſt of Angels appeared as ſtanding round about the Throne, and encircling the Repreſentatives of the whole Church, and of its miniſtring Servants; and they proſtrating themſelves with the deepeſt Humility, Reverence and Adoration before the imperial Throne, joined in Concert with the *general Aſſembly and Church of the Firſt-born,* (Heb. xii. 22, 23.) offering up Thankſgivings and Praiſes to God with them, ſaying, as they had before in Aſcriptions of Glory to God and the Lamb, (*Chap.* v. 11—13.) *Amen,* We heartily concur in this joyful Song. May all devout and ſolemn Acknowledgments and Adorations of God, as infinitely bleſſed in himſelf, and the Fountain of all Bleſſedneſs to others; and may all Aſcriptions of Honour, in Conſideration of his divine Perfections, and wonderful Works of Nature, Providence, Grace and Glory; and of the conſummate Wiſdom, that ſhines forth in them all; and may all Thankſgivings for every Favour of a temporal, ſpiritual and eternal Nature; and the higheſt Aſcriptions, that are due from Angels and Men, together with the moſt ſolemn Acknowledgments of his univerſal Dominion, and almighty Power, be paid to our great and glorious God to the endleſs Ages of Eternity! *Amen,* ſo it ought to be, ſo we heartily deſire it may be, and ſo we firmly believe it ſhall be.

13 *And one of the Elders anſwered, ſaying unto me, What are theſe which are arrayed in white Robes? and whence came they?*

13. Then one of the forementioned Elders, or Repreſentatives of the Church, came near, as another of them had done on a former Occaſion, (*Chap.* v. 5.) and called to me to engage my Attention, and to enquire what my Thoughts were of this illuſtrious Company, ſaying, Do you underſtand the Meaning of this Viſion? Who, think you, are theſe excellent Perſons, that appear ſo glorioſly apparelled with glittering ſpotleſs Robes? And from what Condition, and how is it, that they came hither?

14 *And I ſaid unto him, Sir, thou knoweſt. And he ſaid to me, Theſe are they which came out of great Tribulation, and have waſhed their Robes, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb.*

14. To which I anſwered in an humble, modeſt and reſpectful Manner, and with a free Confeſſion of my own Ignorance, You, Sir, underſtand theſe Things much better than I, and, as it lies in your Power, I ſhould eſteem it a great Favour, if you would pleaſe particularly to inform me of them. Then, to give me a clear and ſatisfying Account of this delightful Scene, he readily replied, This glorious ſhining and Palm-bearing Multitude are the faithful Saints and Servants of Chriſt, that have bravely encountered ſore Trials and Afflictions for his Name's Sake on Earth; (like thoſe mentioned, *Chap.* vi. 9—11.) and ſo *through much Tribulation have entered into the Kingdom of God;* (Act. xiv. 22.) and the ſplendid Robes of perfect Righteouſneſs in which they ſhine, are not purified and brightned

by their own Sufferings, or the Blood of Martyrdom, any more than by their Tears of Repentance, or their own Obedience; but merely by the atoning Blood of the Lamb of God. Not as literally washed with it, which would have made them *red* instead of *white*; but as shed, and applied in its Merit and Virtue, for the Remission of their Sins, and for their complete Justification, and spotless Purity, through Faith in him. (See *Eph.* v. 25—27.)

15 Therefore are they before the Throne of God, and serve him Day and Night in his Temple: And he that sitteth on the Throne shall dwell among them.

15. It is on this Account, as the only meritorious or deserving Cause of it, that they are now exalted to a State of the sublimest Purity and Dignity, Joy and Praise, in the immediate Presence of God as sitting upon his heavenly Throne; and that they incessantly worship, adore and glorify him, as his Attendents, in his holy and blessed Habitation on high, which, though, properly speaking, there is no Night or Darkness in that State, (*Chap.* xxii. 5.) may be called their *serving him Day and Night*, in Allusion to the Priests and Levites, who continually served God by Night, as well as by Day, in the Tabernacle and Temple; (*Psal.* cxxxiv. 1.) And his glorious Majesty, who sits upon the Throne, will ever have the most intimate Communion with them, and gracious Residence among them, to consummate their Felicity.

16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the Sun light on them, nor any Heat.

16. In this honourable and blissful State, they, according to the fullest Meaning of antient Prophecy, (*Isa.* xlix. 10.) shall never have any painful Appetites, like those of unsatisfied Hunger and Thirst; nor any Cravings of greater Happiness than they enjoy, much less of earthly Things, and much less still of carnal and sensual Pleasures: Nor shall they ever be molested any more with fiery Trials that Scorch like the Sun in its full Strength; nor be made uneasy, or incommoded by Sin or Satan, Afflictions or Labours of any Kind, that are uncomfortable, tedious, and irksome, like the Heat of a sultry Day.

17 For the Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living Fountains of Waters: and God shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes.

17. For, as to their *not hungring nor thirsting*, the exalted Lamb of God, who in Distinction from the Saints and Angels that stand before, and round about the Throne, (*ver.* 9, 11.) sits with his heavenly Father, possessed of all divine Majesty and Power, as God-Man Mediator, in his Throne, (*Chap.* iii. 21.) He will perpetually supply and satiate them with the richest Entertainments; and will conduct them to the Fountain-Head of ever flowing, over-flowing, and ever living and reviving Consolations: And, as to their being *freed from all Uneasiness*, the great and blessed God will intirely take away all Causes and Appearances of Trouble from them; and as a tender Mother, not only suckles her Child, but wipes off the mournful Tears that trickle down from its Eyes, and doth all she can to cheer and comfort it; so their God will effectually remove all Sorrow from their Hearts, and every Token of it; all former Grievances being passed away. (*Chap.* xxi. 4.)

RECOL-

Recollections.

With what Kindness, Care and Tenderness doth God indulge his People, by giving them seasonable Respites from the Troubles of this evil World! Yea, so great is his Favour toward them, that, for their Sakes, he mercifully averts public Judgments from those Nations of the Earth, that permit them to live in Peace and Safety; and when, through the Corruption of Mankind, Persecutions and Errors threaten the Church of Christ, he will take effectual Care of his sealed Ones, and have a vast many Thousands of them here below to own, honour and serve him. How should it animate their Faith, Patience and Courage under all their Tribulations for Christ, to think of the glorious, final and eternal Issue of them all! God in the Riches of his Grace will abundantly more than compensate their severest Hardships for his Sake. Innumerable Multitudes of them from among all Nations shall shine in the brightest Robes of Purity, Righteousness and Glory, as made white by the Blood of the Lamb; and they shall triumph, as with Palms of Victory, Joy and Praise in their Hands; and shall worship God with unwearied and uninterrupted Pleasure in his heavenly Temple above. God himself, as sitting on his Throne of Glory, will dwell, in the most immediate and delightful Manner among them, to banish all Uneasiness far from them; and he as the original Fountain, and Jesus Christ as the Purchaser, and immediate Bestower of all possible Blessedness, will refresh and completely satisfy them with the most refined and transporting, substantial and noble Enjoyments, ever fresh and flowing to the utmost of their enlarged Capacities and Desires. And O with what cheerful Acclamations in Heaven will they disclaim all Merit of their own, and ascribe the intire Glory of their Salvation to the free and distinguishing Grace of God, through the atoning Sacrifice of his Son! And with what harmonious Concert will all the holy Angels join in celebrating the Praises of God's Perfections, and of his Works of Nature, Providence and Grace! To whom, together with the Lamb, be ascribed all Glory for ever and ever, *Amen.*

CHAP. VIII.

The seventh Seal is opened, and Silence follows in Heaven for a little Space: and seven Angels appear with seven Trumpets, ready to proclaim the Purpose of God relating to the Roman-*Empire, the Church and the World, after the Christian-Faith had been publicly embraced, and began to be corrupted;* 1, 2. *But, before they execute their Office, another Angel appears at the golden Altar to offer Incense with the Prayers of all Saints; and then casts Fire on the Earth, which produces terrible Storms of Vengeance;* 3—5. *Hereupon the seven Angels prepare to sound their Trumpets in their Order, as Signals of the Judgments of God, that were to be gradually executed on the Empire,* 6. *The first Angel blows his Trumpet, which is followed with a Storm of Hail, Fire and Blood; signifying the great Destruction that should fall on the Christian-Empire after* Constantine's *Death, till the Reign of* Theodosius *from about the Year* 337, *to* 379, 7. *The second Trumpet is followed with a burning Mountain cast into the Sea; signifying the Invasion of* Italy *by the northern Nations, till* Rome *was sack'd by* Alaric *about the Year* 412, 8, 9. *The third Trumpet is followed with the falling of a fiery Star, called Wormwood, on the Rivers; signifying the Devastations in* Italy, *that put an End to the* Roman-*Empire, and set up the Kingdom of the* Goths *about the Year* 493, 10, 11. *The fourth Trumpet is followed with a Darkning of the third Part of the Sun, Moon and Stars; signifying*

further Wars in Italy, *that ended in a total Subversion of the Power of* Rome, *and the setting up of the Exarchate of* Ravenna *about the Year* 568, 12. *And another Angel denounces still greater Woes to come upon the Earth under the three following Trumpets*, 13.

PERIOD. II.

TEXT.	PARAPHRASE.
AND when he had opened the seventh Seal, there was Silence in Heaven about the space of half an Hour.	1. AND now, to go on with my prophetic Vision of the righteous Judgments of God, that would fall on the *Roman*-Empire after it became Christian, but degenerated into persecuting and erroneous Principles and Practices; When the Lord Jesus, the Lamb of God, who had opened the *six* former Seals, (*Chap.* vi.) took off the *seventh* and last, to disclose the Contents, of that Part of the Roll, I perceived that, as in the Temple-worship, the People were silently employed in secret Prayer at the Time of Incense, (*Luke* i. 10.) there was a profound Silence in Heaven for a little while, in humble Expectation of what was next to be revealed after the short Interval of the Church's Peace and Prosperity. (*Chap.* vii. 3.)
2 *And I saw the seven Angels which stood before God: and to them were given seven Trumpets.*	2. And I saw the seven Angels hereafter mentioned, (*ver.* 6.) who stood before God to receive and execute his Commands: And there was an Appearance of *seven* Trumpets that were given to them, each of them having one, to proclaim the Judgments, which were to be executed in seven successive Seasons, till they all should be compleated.
3 *And another Angel came and stood at the Altar, having a golden Censer; and there was given unto him much Incense, that he should offer* it *with the Prayers of all Saints, upon the golden Altar which was before the Throne.*	3. And I beheld another Angel, superior to all these, even the Messenger of the Covenant, the same Head and Lord of all the angelic Host, that appeared before with a sovereign Command over them: (*Chap.* vii. 2.) * And as the High Priest on the great Day of Atonement carried a more than ordinary Quantity of Incense in a golden Censer, and burnt it in the Holy of Holies before the Lord; so this glorious *Angel of God's Presence*, who in his incarnate Person is the Gospel-High Priest, was represented as standing in a ministring Posture before the Altar of burnt-Offering, to signify the Atonement he had made by his Blood; and then as having a golden Censer, filled with live Coals from the Altar, to signify that his Media-

* I think what is said of this *Angel* can agree to no other than Christ himself; (See the Note on *Chap.* vii. 2.) and am inclined, with Sir *Isaac Newton*, (See his Observations on the Apocalypse, pag. 264.) to understand this *offering of Incense* in Allusion to the Service of the *High Priest*, who on the Day of Expiation took Fire from the great Altar in a golden Censer, and carrying a more than common Quantity, which might be called *much Incense*, burnt it before the Lord within the Veil on that Day, *Lev.* xvi. 12, 13, and *Heb.* ix. 4: For this seems to be the most lively and striking Figure of the Intercession of Christ, our great High Priest, who is *entered into that within the Veil, even Heaven itself.* (Heb. iv. 14, and vi. 19, 20.) However, it is of little Importance, whether we take the Allusion to be to the *daily Service* of the High Priest, (*Exod.* xxx. 7, 8.) or to *that* on the *great Day of Atonement.*

tion is carried on in Virtue of his expiatory Sacrifice: And much Incense was given him, to signify the Fulness of his Merit in the Discharge of his priestly Office, to which he was called, and for which he was anointed by God the Father, (ινα δωση ταις προσευχαις) to the End that he might give or add it to the humble, importunate and believing Prayers of all, that are cleansed by his Blood and sanctified by his Spirit, to render them acceptable to God in his Intercession before the Mercy-seat, or Throne of Grace; as the sweet Perfume of Incense, which was offered on the golden Altar was a typical Appointment for adding Fragrancy to the Prayers of *Israel*, his peculiar People.

4 *And the Smoke of the Incense*, which came *with the Prayers of the Saints, ascended up before God, out of the Angel's Hand.*

4. And as the perfuming Smoke of Incense, which was made of the finest aromatic Spices, ascended up like a Cloud to Heaven with the Prayers of the Congregation of *Israel*, that were offered at the same Time; So a Representation was made of the Virtue of Christ's Sacrifice, which mingled like a sweet Odour, with the Prayers of holy Worshippers; and, like the Incense that passed through the Hands of the High Priest, was presented together with them before God, by the Mediator and Messenger of the New Covenant in his ever-prevailing Advocacy, to cover their Imperfections, and recommend them to the divine Favour for Audience and Acceptance.

5 *And the Angel took the Censer, and filled it with the Fire of the Altar, and cast it into the Earth: and there were Voices, and Thunderings, and Lightnings, and an Earthquake.*

5. And the Angel of God's Presence having thus, in his tender Love and Compassion to his People, sealed and taken Care of them, (*Chap.* vii. 2, 3.) and secured a gracious Answer to their regular Prayers, (*ver.* 4.) before the intended Desolations were to come upon the Earth; He then, to shew his just Indignation against his and their Enemies, was represented to me, as taking the Censer, and as going from the golden to the brazen Altar, where he filled it with the burning Coals of this Altar, which were an Emblem of the Wrath of God that could be appeased only by a Sacrifice of Atonement; and he threw them down with mighty Vengeance on the *Roman*-Empire, the principal Part of this Earth, that had corrupted the Christian-Faith, Worship and Manners, and endeavoured by all subtle and violent Measures to suppress them: And immediately hereupon, there arose a terrible Tempest, which produced roaring Winds, and loud Claps of Thunder, and strong Flashes of Lightning, and a shocking Earthquake, as though all Nature were dissolving; † which were awful Emblems of direful Judgments, that were to be denounced, as what should be executed in their Order.

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† *Voices, Thunderings, Lightnings, and Earthquakes*, attended with *Fire*, are Emblems in Scripture-Language of dreadful Calamities, which God inflicts in Ways of righteous Judgment, and particularly in this prophetic Book, *Chap.* xvi. 18, and xx. 9.

6. Ac-

6 And the seven Angels which had the seven Trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

6. Accordingly the ſeven Angels, who were commiſſioned to ſound the Alarm in their reſpective Courſes, and were no longer under Reſtraint, as the four Angels were before, (*Chap.* vii. 3.) ſeemed to put themſelves into a proper Poſture for blowing each one his Trumpet in its Courſe.

7 The first Angel sounded, and there followed Hail and Fire mingled with Blood, and they were cast upon the Earth: and the third Part of Trees was burnt up, and all green Graſs was burnt up.

TRUMPET I.] 7. Then the *firſt* Angel ſounded his Trumpet; and thereupon I had a Viſion of a dreadful Tempeſt of Hail and Lightning, attended with a Shower of Blood, like one of the Plagues of *Egypt*; (Exod. ix. 24, 25.) which ſignified in the Stile of Prophecy great Devaſtation upon the Wicked of the Earth: (*Pſ.* xi. 6, and xviii. 13, *Iſa.* xxviii. 2, and xxix. 6, and xxx. 30.) And ſo mighty was the Deſolation, that it cut off the great Men and common People, as emblematically repreſented by the Blaſt, that ſuch Storms ordinarily bring upon the Trees and green Graſs of the Field; Which may be conſidered as a figurative Deſcription of the woful Calamities, that were to be brought upon the Empire between the Year 337 and 379, by Means of the Wars of *Conſtantine*, *Conſtans* and *Conſtantius*, the three Sons of *Conſtantine* the Great, which commenced ſoon after his Deceaſe; and iſſued in the Deſtruction of his Family, and in the terrible Ravages, that were made on all Ranks and Degrees of People, together with the Fruits of the Ground, and vaſt Effuſions of Blood, by the northern barbarous Nations that broke in upon the Empire; * which might be ſtiled *the third Part* of the Earth, according to the Reckoning of the Antients, who, till *America* was diſcovered, ſpoke of the Earth as divided into three Parts, of which *Europe* was one.

8 And the second Angel sounded, and as it were a great Mountain burning with Fire was cast into the Sea: and the third Part of the Sea became Blood;

9 And the third Part of the Creatures which were in the Sea, and had Life, died;

TRUMPET II.] 8, 9. Then the *ſecond* Angel blew his Trumpet; and thereupon, methought, I ſaw an awful Appearance, as though a huge Mountain, all on Fire, was thrown into the Sea; by means of which the Waters of the third Part of the Sea were turned into Blood, as the great River *Euphrates* formerly was in one of the Plagues of *Egypt*. (Exod. vii. 17, 18.) And this was ſo grievous a Calamity, that the third Part of the Fiſhes, which ſwam in the Sea, were killed; and the third Part of Men, in their Ships of War and Veſſels of Merchandize, were deſtroyed; † which was a figurative Prediction of further Judgments that ſhould make diſmal

* The Hiſtories of the Times that correſpond to this and following Prophecies, may be conſulted in Meſſrs. *Mede*, *Vitringa*, *Whiſton*, and *Lowman*, the laſt of which I have moſtly fallen in with, and to which the Reader is there referred for theſe and ſeveral other Facts under this and the ſucceeding Trumpets.

† In the Stile of Prophecy, *Mountains* are Emblems of *Cities*, and *caſting them into the Sea* of the terrible *Deſolations*. Jer. li. 25—30, and *Pſ.* xlvi. 2: *The Sea* as a Collection of Waters, is an Emblem of large Collections of People into one Body politic. (*Rev.* xvii. 15: And *dead Fiſhes of the Waters* are Emblems of the Deſtruction of Nations. *Ezek.* xxix. 3—12. And ſo theſe are proper Figures to repreſent *Rome*, and the Country round about, as tumbling into Confuſion and Ruin.

and the third Part of the Ships were destroyed.

Havoc upon *Rome* and *Italy*, and other Parts of the Western Empire, to the Destruction of Abundance of their Inhabitants, Strength and Riches; and may be consider'd as fulfilled, by repeated Irruptions of the *Vandals* and other barbarous Nations into *France* and *Spain*, &c; and by *Alaricus*'s plundering *Rome*, and laying waste the Country round about it, between the Year 379 and 412.

10 *And the third Angel sounded, and there fell a great Star from Heaven, burning as it were a Lamp, and it fell upon the third Part of the Rivers, and upon the Fountains of Waters:*

11 *And the Name of the Star is called Wormwood: And the third Part of the Waters became Wormwood; and many Men died of the Waters, because they were made bitter.*

TRUMPET III.] 10, 11. Then the *third* Angel blew his Trumpet; and thereupon, methought, I beheld a great blazing Star falling down, like a fiery Meteor, from Heaven to the Earth; and it lighted upon the third Part of the Rivers, and Springs or Fountains of Water: And so exceeding bitter were the Fruits of this, that from thence it may be figuratively called *Wormwood*; and by the falling down of this flaming Star those Waters were infected with such a poisonous Quality, as killed Multitudes of People that drank of them; because they were most grievously bitter: Thereby signifying still greater Devastations that should cut off several of the *Roman*-Provinces, and, in a Manner, destroy the Government itself, the Seat of Empire and the Fountain of all Authority in it; which may be considered as emblematical of the following Invasions of the *Goths* and *Vandals*, and other barbarous Nations between the Year 412 and 493; chiefly under the Command of *Genserick*, who came into *Italy*, and sack'd and plunder'd *Rome* about the the Year 455; and under the Command of *Odoacer* King of the *Heruli*, who again invaded *Italy* about the Year 476, and march'd to *Rome*, which he also took and plunder'd, carrying away a great deal of its Treasure, and a Multitude of People; and returning afterwards retook *Rome*, conquer'd all *Italy*; and, assuming the Title of *King* to himself, dethroned *Augustulus* the Christian-Emperor; which was figuratively represented, according to prophetic Stile, by the *falling of a Star*, (Isa. xiv. 12—15, and *Dan.* viii. 10.) and by *drying up Fountains and Rivers of Water*; (Isa. xix. 4—8, and *Hos.* xiii. 15, 16.) and which was like that Plague of *Egypt*, whereby the Rivers, Ponds and Pools stank, and all their Waters were turned into Blood. (*Exod.* vii. 20, 21.)

12 *And the fourth Angel sounded, and the third Part of the Sun was smitten, and the third Part of the Moon, and the third Part of the Stars; so as the third Part of them was darkened, and the Day shone not for a third Part of it, and the Night likewise.*

TRUMPET IV.] 12. Then the *fourth* Angel blew his Trumpet; and thereupon, methought, I saw a thick Darkness covering the Face of the Heavens to such a Degree, that the Sun, which shone on this third Part of the Earth, gave no Light by Day, nor the Moon nor Stars by Night; insomuch that all was gloomy and dismal, intirely dark unto a total Eclipse, which over-shadow'd this third Part of the Earth, both Day and Night; which might signify the utter Destruction of the Imperial City, and of all its Authority, both supreme and subordinate, as lodged in the Hands of Princes, Nobles and inferior Magistrates under its former Constitution, according to prophetic Representations of the dreadful Downfall of Kingdoms and Nations,

by the *Darkning of the Sun, Moon and Stars.* (Isa. xiii. 9—11, and Ezek. xxxii. 7, 8.) * And this may be considered as fulfilled between the Year 493 and 568, by Means of the Wars in *Italy* between the *Goths* and the Forces of *Justinian* the Emperor of the East, which lasted about twenty Years; and in the Course of which *Rome* was besieged and taken five Times; and all the Country suffered the greatest Calamities of War, attended with the Pestilence and Famine, till, at length, *Rome* was intirely subdued, and deprived of all Remains of Authority, and subjected to the *Exarchate*, which was set up at *Ravenna* about the Year 568.

13 *And I beheld, and heard an Angel flying through the Midst of Heaven, saying with a loud Voice, Wo, wo, wo to the Inhabiters of the Earth, by Reason of the other Voices of the Trumpet of the three Angels which are yet to sound.*

13. And while I was waiting to hear the *fifth* Angel sound his Trumpet, I saw in my Vision and heard, not one of the *seven* but another Angel, who flew with the utmost Speed through the Midst of Heaven, and cried aloud with a terrible Voice, that all might hear, and the Church might take Warning, and prepare for all Events, saying, Though the Judgments which have been foretold, under the four Trumpets already sounded, as to come upon the *Roman-Empire*, and particularly on its *Western* Part, for its Degeneracy since it became Christian, are very great; yet much more tremendous and extensive Calamities still are appointed of God to be inflicted particularly on the Subjects of its *Eastern* Part, by Means of the severer Punishments that are to be denounced against them, for their gross Corruptions in Doctrine, Worship and Manners, by the three other Trumpets, which the remaining three Angels are to sound in their Order, as Signals of them; and so he ushered them in with three *Woes*, distinctly repeated, that would fall in their Order upon the *Eastern*, as well as the *Western* Empire; the *two first* by the Ravages of the *Saracens* under the *fifth* and *sixth* Trumpets; and the *third* upon all Antichristian Nations, *Eastern* and *Western*, under the *seventh*.

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* Mr. *Lowman*, in his History of the third and fourth Trumpets, observes, that soon after *Odoacer* had taken to himself the Title of King of *Italy*, (some make it about two Years) " *Theodorick* at the Head of the *Goths* in *Illyricum* attacks *Odoacer*'s new-founded Kingdom in *Italy*, engages *Odoacer*, overcomes him, and puts him to Death; and so founded the *Gothic* Kingdom of *Italy*, which continued many Years under his Successors, till it was subdued by *Narses*, for the Emperor *Justinian*, A. D. 553. However, under the *Gothic* Kingdom *Rome*, though it lost the supreme Authority of the Empire, was permitted to retain some Appearance of its antient Form of Government and Magistracy. *Theodorick* made *Ravenna* the Seat of his Kingdom; yet *Rome* retained its Senate and Consuls, and the Image of its former Government.—A little after the *Exarchate* of *Ravenna* was established by the Emperor *Justin* II. *Longinus* is sent into *Italy*. He appoints a new Form of Government: The Seat of Government was from that Time fixed at *Ravenna*, and every City of *Italy* intirely subjected to the *Exarch*, both in Things civil and military.—Thus *Rome* lost all her Dignity and Authority, her Senate and Consuls; and was put upon a Level with all the lesser Cities and Towns of *Italy*, and became only a small Dutchy of the *Exarchate*," &c.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How ſhort are the Intervals of Proſperity and Peace to the Church of Chriſt in perſec Ages! But while they are engaged in humble and ſolemn Addreſſes at the Throne of G and commit themſelves and all their Concerns by Faith to the wiſe, holy and ſovereign D ſals of divine Providence, Jeſus their great High Prieſt, Altar and Sacrifice, as well a Angel of the Covenant, preſents their Prayers in his Interceſſion, and perfumes them wit Odours of his atoning Death, which is like the ſweeteſt of all Incenſe to take away the C ſiveneſs of their Imperfections, that they may be graciouſly accepted, heard and anſwerec happy Proviſion for all the Saints in the worſt of Times! They are taken under divine and Protection, while all the Terrors of God's righteous Vengeance are coming upc Wicked of this World, and the degenerate Profeſſors of Chriſt's Name. What Imag Horror can be ſtrong enough to paint out their bitter Diſtreſs! We may read ſomething o the ſtriking Emblems of tempeſtuous Winds, Thunders, Lightnings and Earthquakes, ful Storms of Hail, Fire and Blood, burning Mountains, falling Stars and the moſt Darkneſs, that throw all Nature into Convulſions, and ſpread Conſternation and Mi Death and Ruin, among all Ranks and Orders of Men upon Earth, eſpecially among thoſ wear, but diſhonour and abuſe, the Chriſtian-Name by their Abominations. And yet long-ſuffering and ſlow to Anger is the gracious God! What previous repeated Warning Notices beforehand doth he give, by his Word and Providence, to lead Men to Repen when he is about to come out of his Place to puniſh the Inhabitants of the Earth! Anc gradually doth he proceed in executing firſt leſſer, and then greater Judgments upon proportionate to the Increaſe of their Iniquity, and Obſtinacy in it, 'till, all former M having failed of reclaiming them, he makes an utter End of them! But O the Cc and Encouragement of true Believers! The bleſſed God takes their Part againſt all h their Enemies; there ſhall ſoon be an End of all their Troubles, though the Wicked fa Miſchief, never to riſe more. *The Righteous ſhall rejoice when he ſees*, but ſhall not fee *Vengeance; ſo that a Man ſhall ſay, Verily there is a Reward for the Righteous; verily God that judges in the Earth.* (Pſ. lviii. 10, 11.)

CHAP. IX.

The fifth Trumpet is followed with a Repreſentation of another Star as fa from Heaven, and opening the bottomleſs Pit, out of which Swarms of L come to torment Men upon Earth; ſignifying the Riſe of Mahomet, *a ſpreading of his Impoſture, and of the* Saracen-*Dominion under him a Succeſſors in the Eaſtern, as well as Weſtern Empire, between the Year and 675,* 1—12. *The ſixth Trumpet is followed with a Repreſentati the looſing of four Angels that were bound in the great River* Euphr *ſignifying God's taking off the Reſtraint that had been laid for ſome upon the* Saracens, *and now permitting them to invade the Empire again, make further Progreſs in their Conqueſts, between the Year 675 and* 13—21.

TEXT.	PARAPHRASE.
AND *the fifth Angel ſounded, and I ſaw a Star fall*	TRUMPET V, being the *firſt Woe-Trumpet.*] 1. AFTER the ſolemn ing given (*Chap.* vii of the three following *Woes*, The *fifth* Angel ble

him was given the Key of the bottomless Pit.

(πεπτωκότα) like a pestilential Meteor, from Heaven down upon the Earth: And Permission was granted him for exerting destructive Power, signified by the Emblem of a Key, with which he might open the Gate of Hell to let out the unclean Spirits, that had been shut up there, as in a bottomless Depth of Horror and Darkness; (*Chap.* xx. 1—3.) * Which may be considered as a figurative Prediction of the Rise of *Mahomet*, and of the Irruption of the *Saracens* under him and his Successors into the *Eastern*, as well as Western Empire of the *Romans*, to propagate his Impostures, who revolted from Christianity, and set up a Dominion among them by the Assistance of infernal Spirits, as might best answer their wicked Temper and Design.

2 *And he opened the bottomless Pit, and there arose a Smoke out of the Pit, as the Smoke of a great Furnace; and the Sun and the Air were darkened by reason of the Smoke of the Pit.*

2. And this Impostor, as I saw in my Vision, made Use of his Power to open the Mouth of the infernal Abyss; and immediately thereupon a thick and dark Smoke burst out of the Pit of Hell, like the Smoke that ascends from a large burning Kiln or Stove, and like that which rose from the Conflagration of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*: (Gen. xix. 28.) And so thick was this hideous Smoke of the Pit, that the Face of the Sun, and the whole Region of the Air were covered with horrid Darkness; Which may be considered as an Emblem of the gross Errors, that would be spread by *Mahomet* and his Followers, to darken the Eyes of Men's Understandings, and hide the Light of Truth from them, and to destroy all that was dear and valuable to them, in great Fury, as the Judgments of God are expressed by like Figures. (*Ps.* xviii. 8, and *Isa.* xiv. 31.)

3 *And there came out of the Smoke Locusts upon the Earth; and unto them was given Power, as the Scorpions of the Earth have Power.*

3. And, to set forth the pernicious Nature of this black Smoke, methought, I saw the Appearance of a formidable Swarm of Locusts issuing out from thence, after the Manner of natural Locusts, that commonly lay their Eggs, and breed in deep Pits, out of which they rise and cover the Face of the Earth, as they did in one of the Plagues of *Egypt*: (Exod. x. 4, 5, 12—15.) And they, by divine Permission, were exceeding malignant and mischievous, like the most venomous *Land-Scorpions*, that have both Ability

* Some make this *Star that fell from Heaven* to point at Pope *Boniface* the *Third*, who was the first that assumed the Title of *Universal Bishop* in the Year 606, by the Grant of the Tyrant *Phocas*; and they accordingly explain the *Locusts* to mean the *Romish Clergy*, and particularly the *Jesuits*. But this Order of Men, in the Apostate Church, was not founded till several hundreds of Years after the Time that this Trumpet seems to relate to; nor does it agree to the Nature of this Prophecy, which (as I take it) principally respects the *Eastern* Empire; nor to the general Nature of the *Trumpets*, which sound *Misery* and *Destruction*, not so much to the true Church of Christ, as to the *Empire*. I therefore chuse, with many others, and think it most agreeable to the following Description of the *Locusts*, to understand it of *Mahomet*, who likewise began his Pretences to Inspiration about the Year 606, and under whom, and his Successors, the *Saracens* made great Conquests in *Europe*, *Asia* and *Africa*, which commenced many Years after the Exarchate had been set up at *Ravenna*, and a few Years before *Mahomet* died, which, according to Dean *Prideaux*, (See his Life of *Mahomet*, Pag. 70—76, Edit. 7.) was in the Year 632; and the Conquests he made were carried on with great Rapidity and Extent under his Successors, to about the Year 651; soon after which a Stop was put to them by the Death of *Othman*, about 655, for about 50 Years.

and

and Inclination to wound and torment Men upon the Earth; Which may be considered as an Emblem of vast Multitudes of *Saracens* or *Arabians*, that would break into the Empire, and especially the eastern Part of it, to make speedy and dreadful Havoc upon it, according to prophetic Descriptions of the Destruction of Nations by prodigious Numbers of *Grass-hoppers* and *Locusts*: (Judg. vi. 5, and *Isa.* xxxiii. 4.)

4 *And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the Grass of the Earth, neither any green Thing, neither any Tree; but only those Men which have not the Seal of God in their Foreheads.*

4. And as these were not Locusts in a *literal*, but only in a *metaphorical* Sense, to signify their *Multitude* and the *Swiftness* of their Flight for doing Mischief; but could proceed no farther than God would permit them, He effectually charged and over-ruled them, by his Providence, not to injure the Grass of the Earth, nor any green Herb, nor any Fruit-Tree, which natural Locusts usually love to prey upon; nor to vent their poisonous and destructive Influence upon any but those Men, whom he had not order'd to be seal'd; as though marked on their Foreheads, as he had his own peculiar People, on another Occasion before; (*Chap.* vii. 3) Which may be considered as a figurative Prediction of the special Care that God would take to preserve his faithful Servants, with their Ministers or others, who have the Truth of Grace in them, to preserve them from the mischievous Errors, and cruel Violence of those wicked Enemies to Christian-Religion, that the true Church might not be destroy'd by their Ravages, nor corrupted by their new Impostures; while he suffered them to infect only the idolatrous Church of *Rome*, and to prey upon them.

5 *And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five Months: And their Torment* was *as the Torment of a Scorpion when he striketh a Man.*

5. And as a further Limitation of their Power, even with respect to carnal and apostate Christians themselves, they were ordered, for the present, not to persecute them unto Death, nor to murder such Multitudes of them, as they afterward would under the *sixth Trumpet*; but to harass, ravage and distress them for a Season; which may be figuratively called *five Months*, in Allusion to the Time of natural Locusts living in the Summer-Season *: And these savage Creatures went to the Extent of their Commission by afflicting them in as grievous and painful a Manner, as though it were by the W[illegible] of a Scorpion, when

* The *natural Locusts* are said to live only the *five Summer Months*, inclusive of *May* and *September*; and the Way of the *Saracens* Wars upon the Empire was by Incursions only in the Summer-Seasons, to which their *tormenting five Months* seems more naturally to refer, than to the Years of the Continuance of their Power, by casting the Months into Days, at the Rate of thirty Days to a Month; and then reckoning each Day for a Year, the Amount of which is 150 Years; which some suppose to be descriptive of the *Space of Time* from the Beginning to the End of these Incursions of the *Saracens* into the Empire: And as this Interpretation has something plausible in it, according to the common Scheme of the *Trumpet-Prophecies*, I would refer the Reader to what Mess. *Jurieu*, *Daubuz*, *Mede*, and Dr. *More* have said upon it. However, it is generally agreed, that the *Saracens* in their first Expedition chiefly *plundered and ravaged*, but did not commonly *kill* those of the Christian-Nations, whom they conquered; nor put them to Death for their Profession of Christianity; nor did they succeed in their Sieges of *Constantinople* and *Rome* then, as they did afterwards under *the sixth Trumpet*.

 he

he strikes a Man with his Sting; Which may be considered as a figurative Prediction, that these *Saracen*-Spoilers should be permitted to spread sore Calamities all around them, tho' restrained from such terrible Slaughter, as they would afterward make at their next Invasion.

6 And in those Days shall Men seek Death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and Death shall flee from them.

6. And their various Ways of distressing Men in those Days were represented to be so severe, as would imbitter their Lives to such a Degree, that, as was prophesied of *Judah*, when their threatned Miseries should come upon them for their Idolatry, (*Jer.* viii. 3) they would choose Death, rather than Life; and would wish for Death to put an End to their Torments, rather than continue to live under them; but their Enemies were restrained, at present, from affording them this piteous Sort of Relief to their Groans.

7 And the Shapes of the Locusts were *like unto Horses prepared unto Battle; and on their Heads* were *as it were Crowns like Gold, and their Faces* were *as the Faces of Men.*

7. And so dreadful was the Appearance of the Forms of these figurative Locusts, that they seemed to be like Horses ready accouter'd for War, (*Joel* ii. 4) and to carry a Resemblance of golden Crowns on their Heads; and their Faces had the Shape and Air of Men: All which may be consider'd, as an emblematical Prediction of the terrible Ravage that the *Saracens* would make in Battle, with great Sagacity, Speed and Strength, according to their customary Way of fighting upon *Arabian*-Horses, which, like Locusts, were swift of Flight in Pursuit of Victory; whose Riders would triumph, like crown'd Conquerors of several Kingdoms, where they should come; and would wear Turbants, like Crowns, on their Heads.

8. And they had Hair as the Hair of Women, and their Teeth were as the Teeth *of Lions.*

8. And, as a further Description of this very People, They were represented in my Vision, as wearing their Hair in an effeminate Manner, like Women, after the *Arabian* Fashion, either dischevell'd to a great Length upon their Backs, or else plaited and tressed up; which may be consider'd, as an Emblem of their insinuating and lecherous Temper: And the Appearance of their Teeth was sharp and strong, like those of Lions, to signify their rapacious Fury, and the Prevalence of their Arms, as *a strong People set in Battle-array*, according to the prophetic Meaning of such Images. (*Joel* i. 6, and ii. 5.)

9 And they had Breast-plates, as it were Breast-plates of Iron; and the Sound of their Wings was *as the Sound of Chariots of many Horses running to Battle.*

9. And, to shew that their *defensive* was equal to their *offensive* Armament, They, in Allusion to the hard horny Skin of the natural Locusts, appeared with Breastplates, to secure their Hearts from mortal Wounds, as hard and impenetrable as if made of Iron; a proper Emblem of their being Proof against the Assaults of those in the Empire, with whom they waged War; and against their being overcome in Battle, or invaded, by way of Reprisal, in their own Land. And the rushing Speed and Multitude of their Armies on *Arabian*-Horses, which would give dreadful Alarms to all that were near them, was represented by the loud Noise, that Locusts make with clapping their Wings when

when they fly in large Companies, as if it were the Sound of a Multitude of Chariots and Horses, clattering and rushing into the Battle, according to the Description that is given of Armies in prophetic Language. (*Joel* ii. 4, 5.)

10 *And they had Tails like unto Scorpions, and there were Stings in their Tails: And their Power* was *to hurt Men five Months.*

10. Furthermore, They were represented in uncommon and surprising Forms, as having long Tails, like those of venomous Scorpions; and they, like them, had desperate Stings in their Tails; signifying that they would not only make dreadful Havoc by the Power of their Arms, but would also infect the wicked Inhabitants of the Empire with their poisonous Errors, by their false Teachers, who, in prophetic Stile, are called *the Tail*; (Isa. ix. 15) and so, from first to last, would be very pernicious: And this Power of theirs was to be continued, for a considerable Time, to its proper Period, like the Power of Locusts, that are lively and active for about five Summer-Months, which is as long as they ordinarily live. (See the Note on *ver.* 5.)

11 *And they had a King over them,*which is *the Angel of the bottomless Pit, whose Name in the Hebrew* Tongue is *Abaddon, but in the Greek* Tongue *he hath* his *Name Apollyon.*

11. And there was something, in this Representation of them, directly contrary to the Usage of *natural* Locusts, *which have no King*: (Prov. xxx. 27.) But these figurative Locusts appeared as under the Dominion and Government of a powerful, tyrannical and malicious Ruler, whose Likeness they bear, and whose Interests they serve; and he is no other than *primarily* the Devil himself, that Prince of Darkness, and of the fallen Angels in Hell; or *secondarily* one of his wicked Messengers, whose Doctrine came from Hell, whose Name, as also the Name of his *Principal*, answerable to his Temper, Work and Design, is the *Destroyer*, as is signified by the *Hebrew* Word *Abaddon*, and by the *Greek* Word *Apollyon*; Which may be consider'd, as intimating that Satan would be the principal Chief; and, by his Instigation and Influence, *Mahomet*, under him, would be the grand Leader of all the Mischief and Ruin, with respect to civil and religious Concerns, which the *Saracens*, headed by *Mahomet* and his Successors, would bring upon the Empire, by the Power of their Arms, and the Infection of their abominable Errors, unto the Destruction of the Bodies and Souls of Men.

12 *One Wo is past,* and *behold, there come two Woes more hereafter.*

12. Thus *the first* signally terrible *Wo*, which was denounced by the *fifth Angel* to denote the Judgments of God, that should befall the degenerate Christian-Empire, under the first Invasions of the *Saracens*, is represented, as what would be past and gone, about the Year of our Lord 675, when they should bring that War to a Conclusion. But, behold with Astonishment, and assured Expectation! There will be still *two* other yet more tremendous Scenes of Judgment opened, when the *sixth* and *seventh* Angels shall blow their respective Trumpets in their Order; The Account of which follows.

TRUM-

13 *And the sixth Angel sounded, and I heard a Voice from the four Horns of the golden Altar, which is before God,*

14 *Saying to the sixth Angel which had the Trumpet, loose the four Angels which are bound in the great River Euphrates.*

TRUMPET VI. being the *second Wo-Trumpet.*] 13, 14. Then the *sixth* Angel blew his Trumpet; and thereupon, methought, I heard a certain loud Voice, (φωνην μιαν) proceeding from the golden Altar of Incense, which was exhibited to my View, like that which stood before the Mercy-seat in the Tabernacle, (*Exod.* xxx. 1—6) as being four-square, and having four Horns, one at each Corner of the Altar; Which may be consider'd as Emblems of the Intercession of Christ for his People, and of his Power to protect them in the four Corners of the Earth; at which Altar the Angel of the Covenant offered up the Prayers of all Saints in the immediate Presence of God, as has been represented: (*Chap.* viii. 3.) And this being the Voice of Christ himself, he with sovereign Authority commanded the *sixth* Angel, that had the *second Wo-Trumpet*, saying to him, Set at Liberty the four destroying Angels, who have been under Restraint for some Time past, as Messengers of Wrath that are bound, as it were, in Chains at the great River *Euphrates* *; Which may be consider'd as a figurative Prediction of the Order, that would be given and fulfilled in the Dispensations of Providence, to take off the Restraint which had been laid on the *Saracens* for about fifty Years, (See the Note on *ver.* 1) that they might go forth from all Quarters of their Land, to execute yet further Judgments upon the degenerate Christian-Empire in every Part of it toward the four Corners of the Earth, as four other Angels had been before ordered to hold back, or let out, the four

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* I should be strongly inclined, with Mr. *Mede* and his many Followers, to consider *the Sixth Trumpet*, as referring to the Devastations made by the *Otoman* or *Turkish* Empire, were it not that this makes too great a Gap upon the *close Series* of Prophecy, which, as I take it, is carried on from the Beginning to the End: For the *Otoman* Empire did not rise till *Otoman* founded it, from whom it took its Name, and who died about the Year 1326, which is between six and seven Hundred Years after what I apprehend to be the Period of the *fifth Trumpet*; and therefore is not easily reconcileable to the regular and connected Order of these Predictions; unless upon the Plan of *Synchronisms*, which, though so commonly received, have always thrown the whole Scheme into such Confusion in my Mind, as I could never get over, or tell how to adjust: And yet, I must confess that the *sixth Trumpet* has long appeared in my Thoughts to be the most difficult, of any other Part of the Prophecy, to be reconciled with the orderly and well-connected Series of correspondent Events. But I am much obliged to the learned Mr. *Lowman*, whose History of Facts may *probably* account for it, which is all that I can pretend to in this and several other Instances. I have therefore intirely followed the Track that he has drawn out before us, relating to the *sixth Trumpet*, as I have done, and shall in great Measure do, in other Particulars, where I think him to be in the Right, referring the Reader to consult his Collection of Authorities, which I now give Notice of, once for all, whether his Name be mentioned in the several Places, or not. And the Reason given in my Paraphrase on this Verse, why the destroying Angels or Messengers of Wrath (which I take to mean the *Saracens*, as Instruments of divine Providence, according to what is said of them, *ver.* 16, 17) are spoken of as *four*, seems to me the most likely of any other, that I have met with, and falls in with what this learned Writer goes into, according to the Observation of Mr. *Daubuz*, who takes the Number *Four* to denote a *Universality* of the Matter comprised, as the *four Winds* signify *all the Winds*, Jer. xlix. 36, *The four Corners of the Earth*, *all Parts* of the Earth, *Isa.* xi. 12, and *the four Corners of the Land*, *all Parts* of the Land of *Judea*, Ezek. vii. 2. And these destroying Angels were bound in the great River *Euphrates*, according to his Account, by the Divisions and Quarrels of the *Saracens* after the Death of *Othman*, about the Succession to the Empire, which kept them near the River *Euphrates*, where most of their Battles were fought, and prevented their usual Invasions and Incursions into the *Roman*-Empire about 50 Years.

Winds, that were designed for Judgments, according to the Will of God. (*Chap.* vii. 1.)

15 *And the four Angels were loosed, which were prepared for an Hour, and a Day, and a Month, and a Year, for to slay the third Part of Men.*

15. Hereupon the four Angels, or Messengers of divine Wrath, were set at Liberty, and stood ready to execute the Judgments, which God had further designed to bring upon the Romish pretendedly Christian, but really *Antichristian*-Empire, according to the exact Time of his Appointment, whether it be to an Hour, or a Day, or a Month, or a Year, just as he should please to order it in his Providence; and, in that precise Time, to cut off a great Number of the Inhabitants of the Empire, under the Stile of the third Part of the known World; Which may be consider'd as a figurative Prediction of the still more terrible Desolation, that the *Saracens* would make in the Empire, between the Year 675 and 750, when they would enter *Spain* about the Year 713 or 714, and obtain a complete Victory over the *Spaniards*; soon after which they would over-run the whole Country; and afterwards invade *France*, till they were defeated by *Charles Martel*, in a terrible and decisive Battle, which put an intire Stop to their Arms about the Year 734.

16 *And the Number of the Army of the Horsemen* were *two hundred Thousand Thousand: And I heard the Number of them.*

16. And the Multitude of their Horsemen, which their Armies would mostly consist of, was represented to be so prodigiously great, that, as innumerable Companies are expressed by *Thousands of Thousands*, and *Ten Thousand Times Ten Thousand*; (Chap. v. 11, and Dan. vii. 10) so one would be apt to express *this* by two Myriads of Myriads, in Astonishment at it †: And I heard this hyperbolical Proclamation of their Number, to signify that they would be, as it were, past all Account.

17 *And thus I saw the Horses in the Vision, and them that sat on them, having Breastplates of Fire, and of Jacinth, and Brimstone: And the Heads of the Horses* were *as the Heads of Lions; and out of their Mouth issued Fire, and Smoke, and Brimstone.*

17. And in the like astonishing Manner I beheld in my Vision, that these innumerable and formidable *Arabians*, *terrible as an Army with Banners*, rode upon warlike Horses, and that their Riders were furnished with an Armour of Breastplates, defensive and repelling, as Fire; illustrious, firm and solid, as the Jacinth Stone; and invincible, as burning Brimstone, which cannot easily be extinguished *: And the Heads of their Horses had an Aspect as bold, fierce and furious, as the Heads of ravening Lions: And there was a most tremendous Appearance of Streams of Fire, and Smoke, and Brimstone, proceeding out of the Mouths of the Horses and their Riders, with destructive Force: All which may be considered, as emblematical Pre-

† 'Tis not to be supposed that any Army upon Earth could consist of *Two Hundred Thousand Thousand*, or two *Myriads of Myriads*, as the Words signify. (δυο μυριαδες μυριαδων) But as the *Saracens* were famous for the vast and almost incredible Multitude of Forces, which consisted chiefly of *Cavalry* or *Horsemen*; this Number is mentioned in the hyperbolical Strain to denote a Sort of innumerable Multitude.

* What is the Meaning of Breastplates of *Fire, Jacinth and Brimstone*, I conceive can be only Conjecture; and I have ventured to make mine, as being little satisfied with any other, and least of all with that of *Cannon* and *Brimstone-Powder*, or Gun-Powder, which are modern Inventions, some Hundreds of Years after the Time, that I think this Prophecy refers to. (See the Note on *ver.* 14.)

dictions of the wasting and murderous Effects of this cruel victorious Army of the *Saracens*, which would breath out nothing but Misery, Desolation and Slaughter.

18 *By these three was the third Part of Men killed, by the Fire, and by the Smoke, and by the Brimstone, which issued out of their Mouths.*

18. By these three Powers of their Armies, for dreadful Devastation, as signified by the Fire, and Smoke, and Brimstone, which appeared as proceeding out of their Mouths, vast Numbers of the invaded People of the Empire were miserably slain, and the rest suffered the greatest Ravage and Calamities of every other Kind. (*ver.* 20.)

19 *For their Power is in their Mouth, and in their Tails: For their Tails* were *like unto Serpents, and had Heads, and with them they do Hurt.*

19. For, according to this Representation of them, their Power of spreading Desolation, Death and Ruin, seemed to proceed out of their Mouths, which spoke Terror and Mischief, wheresoever they came; yea, like the first Train of *Saracen*-Invaders, (*ver.* 10.) they were equally mischievous with their Tails: For their Tails had an Appearance like those of a monstrous Sort of Serpents, that are said to have two Heads, one in the Front, and the other at the Tail of their Bodies, for discharging their Poison; Which may be considered as a figurative Prediction of the terrible Wrath, Destruction and pestilential Errors, that would be poured out by the *Rere*, as well as *main Body* of the *Saracen*-Armies in their second Series of Incursions into the *Roman*-Empire, which they would over-run with a Deluge of Destruction to the Bodies and Souls of Men, from the Beginning to the End of their Victories, by the Power of their Princes, who, in prophetic Stile, are called *the Head*; and by their false Teachers, who are called *the Tail.* (Isa. ix. 14, 15.)

20 *And the rest of the Men which were not killed by these Plagues, yet repented not of the Works of their Hands, that they should not worship Devils, and Idols of Gold, and Silver, and Brass, and Stone, and of Wood: Which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:*

21 *Neither repented they of their Murders, nor of their Sorceries, nor of their Fornication, nor of their Thefts.*

20, 21. And, notwithstanding all these dreadful Judgments, the Remainder of those Men, who escaped Death by the Fury of these Invaders, were so stupid and obstinate, as not to take Conviction of, and be reclaimed from their evil Courses, which had brought these severe Calamities upon them, that they might renounce, and depart from their idolatrous Worship of Demons, and of the Images, which their own Hands had made of earthly Materials; such as Gold, and Silver, and Brass, and Stone, and Wood, which are senseless, dumb Idols, that can neither see who they are that adore them; nor hear their Prayers; nor take one Step to answer them, for their Relief: Nor did they repent of, and renounce their murderous Practices; nor their Enchantments; nor their Whoredoms; nor their Robberies, that they had defiled themselves with; Which may be considered as a Prediction of the idolatrous Worship of Angels and departed Saints, and of Images made of all those Sorts of Materials, that wou'd begin to prevail among the Popish Part of the Empire in those Days, and would be encouraged and confirmed by Pope *Gregory* the Second, in Opposition to the Emperor *Leo*'s Orders to remove Images out of the Churches of *Italy*, about the Year 726; and, instead of repenting of their Image-Worship, it

was

was, at length, established by the Authority of Councils: And the other foretold Abominations would still reign among them in their murdering the Saints, in their pretended Exorcisms, in their manifold Uncleannesses, and in their various Kinds of Cheats, and Impositions on the People; which, so far from being repented of, would grow more and more flagrant, till they should bring upon themselves the still more tremendous Woes, to be denounced by the *seventh* and *last Trumpet*; (Chap. xi. 14, 15.) and to be fulfilled by the pouring out of the *seven Vials*. (Chap. xvi.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

How tremendous are the Denunciations, and how sure, after solemn neglected Warnings, are the Executions of God's Wrath on his Enemies, for their Oppressions of his Church, and their other multiplied Abominations! He, whose Kingdom rules over all, has the most terrible Armies of Men and Devils at his Command, to execute deserved Judgments by them. And how easily can he restrain, or let them loose, according to his sovereign and holy Will, beyond which none of them can go! The Instruments of Providence, as his Messengers, shall in his appointed Time bring Distress and Ruin upon carnal and idolatrous Professors of Christ's Name: They, like devouring Locusts, raging Lions, and venomous Scorpions, spread their Terrors and pestilential Principles, to destroy the Lives and Liberties, Bodies and Souls of Men, under the Influence of tyrannical Powers and false Prophets on Earth, and of the Devil, who heads them, and sends them forth, like a great Smoke of horrid Darkness, that rises out of the bottomless Pit. They carry the Face of Men for Sagacity, and of Women for Insinuation; but are really as ravenous and destructive, as the most furious Beasts of Prey and malignant Serpents. But how great soever the Plagues be, that, in the Way of God's righteous Judgments, are inflicted by one Sort of Antichristian-Enemies, like *Mahometan-Saracens*, upon another, like *the Papists*, for their Idolatries, Deceits, Debaucheries, Thefts and Murders; such is their Stupidity and Hardness of Heaat, that they will not repent of their Crimes, nor be reformed; but still persist in them, and grow worse and worse, till, at length, all the Vials of God's Wrath shall be poured out upon them. But O what a Comfort is it to God's own Church and People, that Christ, who appears at the golden Altar on their Behalf, will take Care of them, that they may have a hiding Place in every Day of Evil; and that the Miseries, which will come upon others, shall not touch them, who have this Seal, as it were on their Foreheads, *The Lord knows them that are his!* (2 Tim. ii. 19.)

CHAP. X.

An august Introduction to the seventh Trumpet, in which the Angel of the Covenant is represented as interrupting the Train of Prophecy, for a small Interval, and as presenting a little open Book, and uttering his Voice as a Lion, which is followed with seven Thunders, intimating what he would further reveal under the seven Vials, 1—3, *A Voice from Heaven forbids writing, at present, what was uttered by the seven Thunders,* 4 *The Angel solemnly swears that, at the Expiration of the following Prophecies, Time should be no more, and that in the Days of the seventh Angel the Mystery of God should be finished;* 5—7. *A Voice calls to* John *(who observes it) to eat the Book, which would be sweet in his Mouth, and bitter in his Belly,* 8—10. *And tells him he must further prophesy of the yet future State of the Church*

 and

and of the World, in a successive Order of Time, 11, *which was to be from about the Year* 756, *(when the Pope of* Rome *was first invested with temporal Dominion) for* 1260 *Years then to come, according to the general Description that was to be given of it in the three following Chapters.*

TEXT.	PARAPHRASE.
1 AND *I saw another mighty Angel come down from Heaven, cloathed with a Cloud, and a Rainbow was upon his Head, and his Face* was *as it were the Sun, and his Feet as Pillars of Fire:*	1. AFTER the former Representations, which had been made to me of the State of the *Roman*-Empire and of the Church, first *before*, and then *after* the legal Establishment of Christianity, I was favoured with a succeeding Vision, in which I beheld another Angel, different from, and superior to those, that had Trumpets given them to sound, even Christ himself. (See the Note on *Chap.* vii. 2.) who, though acting the Part of a divine Messenger in human Nature, is Partaker of proper Deity, as *the mighty God*; (Isa. ix. 6.) Methought, I saw this glorious Person descend from Heaven, and covering himself with an illustrious Cloud, as an Emblem of his coming to make a further Revelation for the Instruction and Comfort of the Church; he appeared like the great Jahovah, *who makes the Clouds his Chariot*, (Ps. civ. 3.) as our blessed Lord did in his Descent upon Mount *Sinai*, and Ascension to Heaven: (*Exod.* xxxiv. 5, and *Acts* i. 9.) And there was the circular Form of a beautiful Rainbow over his Head, like that which appeared round about the Throne of God, (*Ezek.* i. 28, and *Rev.* iv. 5. See the Note there) in Token of his being ever mindful of his Covenant in the darkest Times: (See *Gen.* ix. 13—17.) And his Countenance shone with a dazling Lustre, like the Sun in its Meridian-Brightness, to the Admiration and Joy of his People; and his Feet appeared with awful Majesty and Strength, like Pillars of burning Brass for supporting the Faithful, and of Fire for consuming his Enemies, much after the same august Manner, in which he had exhibited himself before. (*Chap.* i. 15, 16. See the Paraphrase there.)
2 *And he had in his Hand a little Book open. And he set his right Foot upon the Sea, and* his *left* Foot *on the Earth,*	2. He also appeared, as holding in his Hand a little unfolded Book or Roll, being the last Part of the Book, which had been sealed, but the Seals of which he had undertaken to loose; (*Chap.* v. 1—7.) and which might be called a *little Book*, as it was now only the Remainder of the Whole, containing such Events as should fall out in Ages yet to come. And he having descended to this terraqueous Globe, as consisting of Land and Water, methought, I saw him stand with his *right* Foot on the *Sea*, and with his *left* on the *Earth*, to signify his Sovereign Dominion over all Persons and Things in *both*; and that he would extend his Government and Grace to the Continents of *Asia*, *Africa* and *Europe*, with their Islands, including both the Eastern and Western Empire, and even *the uttermost Parts of the Earth*, which his Father promised him the Possession of. (*Ps.* ii. 8.)

3 And cried with a loud Voice, as when a Lion roareth: And when he had cried, seven Thunders uttered their Voices.

3. In this Situation he, who has been spoken of as *the Lion of the Tribe of* Judah, (*Chap.* v. 5.) made Proclamation with a strong and tremendous Voice, as loud as the roaring of a Lion, commanding Silence and Attention to what would follow: And no sooner had he given forth this Order, than I heard seven other Voices, as loud, awful and terrible, as the greatest Clap of Thunder, to denounce those Judgments of God *in general*, which were to be particularly executed, in their Order, on his Anti-christian Enemies, by the pouring out of *seven Vials* under the *seventh Trumpet*.

4 And when the seven Thunders had uttered their Voices, I was about to write: And I heard a Voice from Heaven, saying unto me, Seal up those Things which the seven Thunders uttered, and write them not.

4. And when the seven thunder-like Voices had finished their articulate Denunciations, I was going to write them down, as apprehending that I was authorized so to do by the Order before given me, (*Chap.* i. 19.) and that they contained something of great Consequence, for the Comfort of the Church under their Antichristian-Oppressions: But I was immediately stopped short, and prevented by another Voice, which I heard, as directed to me from the Throne of God in Heaven, saying, Keep the Things in your own Breast, which have been uttered by the Voices that were like seven Thunders; ponder them in your Heart, and conceal them, as yet, from public Notice, as closely as if they were sealed up in a Book, that none might read them: And there is no Need for you to write them *now*, as the general Hints, given by them, will be more particularly drawn out in some following Visions; referring to those of the *seventh Trumpet*, and the *seven Vials* under it, which were afterwards to be revealed and recorded.

5 And the Angel which I saw stand upon the Sea, and upon the Earth, lifted up his Hand to Heaven.

6 And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created Heaven and the Things that therein are, and the Earth and the Things that therein are, and the Sea and the Things which are therein, that there should be Time no longer:

5, 6. And to assure me of the Certainty and Importance of the Things, that were further to be revealed, relating to the Affairs of the Church and of the World in Ages yet to come, The glorious Angel, whom, (as is said, *ver.* 2.) I saw standing with one Foot upon the Sea, and the other upon the Earth, was represented to my View, as lifting up his Hand to Heaven, the Throne of God's Glory, according to the antient Manner and Posture of taking solemn Oaths; (*Gen.* xiv. 22, and *Dan.* xii. 7.) and as swearing by the eternal, almighty and immortal God, who, in Distinction from all Idols, is *from Everlasting to Everlasting* the only living and true God, and the Creator of the upper and lower Worlds; of Heaven and all the Hosts thereof, whether in the aerial, the starry, or the Heaven of Heavens; and of the Terraqueous Globe, consisting of the Earth and Sea; and all Things contained therein: And the Purport of this solemn Oath, which Christ took, as the Angel of the Covenant and God's Messenger, was, that, as formerly in Answer to the Question, How long it should be to the End of the then predicted Wonders? He sware that it should be for *a Time, Times, and a half*, † meaning twelve Hundred and

† *A Time, Times, and a half* Time, and *Time shall be no longer*, seem to refer to the same Period, and intimate, not that all Time should then come to an End; but that the glorious State of the Church should

and fixty Years; (*Dan.* xii. 6, 7.) fo he now fware that there fhould be no longer Time, than *that*, before all Antichriftian-Enemies fhould be deftroyed, and a glorious State of the Church fhould take place, and put a final Period to popifh Darknefs, Superftition and Idolatry, as will more diftinctly appear in After-Parts of this Prophecy, though the Time fhall not be yet. (χρονος ουκ εσται ετι.)

7 But in the Days of the Voice of the feventh Angel, when he fhall begin to found, the Myftery of God fhould be finifhed, as he hath declared to his Servants the Prophets.

7. But he fware that in the Days, which would be pointed out by the Denunciations of the *feventh* Angel, when he fhould begin to found his Trumpet, † Then all divine Revelations and Difpenfations of Providence, relating to the Trials and the fucceeding happy Days of the Church, and the Deftruction of Antichrift and Exaltation of the Kingdom of the Lord Jefus in all its Glory, fhould be brought to a Conclufion, which at prefent are Secrets, and will all along in great Meafure be fo, till correfpondent Facts, in a regular Series, fhall explain them, according to the Prophecies and Declarations, that God has given of them to his antient Prophets, and particularly to his Servants, *Daniel* (Chap. vii. 25—28, and xii. 6, 7.) and *Zechariah*. (Chap. xiv. 9.)

8 And the Voice which I heard from Heaven fpake unto me again, and faid, Go, and *take the little Book which is open in the Hand of the Angel which ftandeth upon the Sea, and upon the Earth.*

8. And after this Scene of Vifion, the Voice, which I had heard from Heaven, (*ver.* 4.) called to me again, faying, Go up to the Angel of the Covenant, who you obferve ftands with his *right* Foot on the Sea, and his *left* on the Earth; (*ver.* 2.) and receive from him the little Book or Roll, which is exhibited as unfolded in his Hand, that you may have a clear Infight into the great Things contained therein, with a Commiffion for making them known to others.

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fhould not be yet, 'till after the Expiration of 1260 Years, which are fignified by other prophetic Numbers that are made ufe of to give a *general View* of this Period in the 11th, 12th and 13th Chapters of this Vifion. Accordingly *a Time, Times and a half Time*, as refolved into prophetic Days, fignify 1260 Years, reckoning each Day for a Year, and each Year, to confift of twelve Months of thirty Days each Month: For *three Years*, which anfwer to *Time, Times*, (meaning two more Times) and *a half Time*, or half a Year, make up 42 Months, or 1260 Years, which in our Apoftle's Prophecy are parallel Defcriptions of the exact Time of *the holy City's being trodden under Foot by the* Gentiles, and of the *Witneffes prophefying in Sackcloth*; (Chap. xi. 2, 3.) as alfo of the Church's *Flight into*, and *Nourifhment in the Wildernefs*, (Chap. xii. 6, 14) and of Antichrift's or *the Beaft's Reign*. (Chap. xiii. 5.)—It is evident that, were we to take thefe Numbers of Days, Months and Years in a *literal* Senfe, the Space of Time would be abundantly too fhort for all the Events, that are fpoken of as to be fulfilled in that Time, which includes the whole Period of the laft State of the Sufferings of the Church to its fucceeding glorious State, in which Satan fhall be fhut up for a thoufand Years: But the other Way of computing is agreeable to the prophetic Stile in former Ages, which makes *a Time* ftand for a Year, *Dan.* iv. 25; and *a Day* for a Year, *Numb.* xiv. 34. and *Ezek.* iv. 5, 6: And *feventy Weeks* fignify, not feventy Times feven Weeks of *natural* Days, but feventy Times feven Years, *Dan.* ix. 24, which, according to Sir *Ifaac Newton*, were 490 Years from the Time that the difperfed *Jews* fhould be reincorporated into a People and holy City, until the Death and Refurrection of Chrift. (See his Obfervations on *Daniel*, p. 130. See alfo his Note, p. 137, and 138, about the Way of computing Years, as confifting of 12 Months, and every Month of 30 Days.)

† The *feventh Trumpet*, in Courfe, was to found next, as beginning at the Expiration of the *fixth*; but is deferred to *Chap.* xi. 15, &c. by the Interpofition of a folemn Preface, with which Chrift, the Angel of the Covenant, appeared, at the Beginning of this Chapter, to introduce it.

9. Ac-

9 *And I went unto the Angel, and said unto him, Give me the little Book. And he said unto me, Take* it, *and eat it up; and it shall make thy Belly bitter, but it shall be in thy Mouth sweet as Honey.*

9. Accordingly, in Obedience to the divine Command, I drew near to the Head of all Principalities and Powers, and humbly besought him to deliver that little Book to me, for my Perusal. And he thereupon holding it out, said to me, as he formerly did to the Prophet *Ezekiel*, (Chap. iii. 1—3.) Take it, according to your Request; and then read and meditate upon it, and lay it up in your Heart, till you understand and digest it, and be suitably affected with it, which, in figurative Language, may be called eating it up; (See *Jer.* xv. 16.) and in so doing, you will find some of its Contents, relating to the sore Afflictions and Persecutions that the Church is to suffer, will be as extremely grievous to your Mind, as the bitterest Sensations can be to your Bowels: But the Knowledge of the Mind and Will of God herein, as his Secrets revealed to you, and more especially with respect to the tender Care, which he will all along take of his People, and to the final Issue of all their Troubles, and the Glory that is to follow them, will be as sweet to your Thoughts, as Honey itself can be to your Palate.

10 *And I took the little Book out of the Angel's Hand, and ate it up: and it was in my Mouth sweet as Honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my Belly was bitter.*

10. And I readily took the little open-Book or Roll out of the Angels Hand, and did eat it up in the Manner he ordered me, and I found by Experience, as he told me I would, that my Insight into the great Mysteries revealed therein, taking them all together, was as delightful to my Soul, as it is possible for Honey to be to the Taste. I, like the Prophet (*Jer.* xv. 16.) *found God's Words, and did eat them; and his Word was unto me the Joy and rejoicing of my Heart:* And afterward, when I came to reflect on the Tribulations that must befal the Church of Christ, before it attains its highest Prosperity and Glory on Earth, my Soul was as deeply affected with Pain and Anguish in the doleful Prospect, as the bitterest Tortures can be to the Bowels.

11 *And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many Peoples, and Nations, and Tongues, and Kings.*

11. Then this glorious Angel said to me, Sweet as these Things are in one View, and bitter in another, you must not keep them to yourself, as you was ordered to do by the general Intimations that were given you by the seven Thunder-like Voices; (*ver.* 4.) but you must go on to publish these, for the Support and Comfort of my People, in the further Revelations that shallbe made of them to you, as to come to pass, in their successive Order, * upon many People, and Nations, and Countries of different Languages, and upon Rulers and Potentates, as well as lower Ranks of People, with regard to what shall befal them till the whole Scheme of God's Purposes, Prophecies and Providences shall be accomplished concerning them, and shall end in the total Overthrow of all Antichristian-Enemies, and in the complete Salvation of the Church.

* It is well known to *Grammarians*, that the *Preposition* (επι) with a *dative* Case, as it is here, and rendered *before*, often signifies *concerning*; and, in that *Regimen*, it is translated *over* and *upon*, as in *Luke.* vx. 7, *over one Sinner*, (επι ενι αμαρτωλω) and *Eph.* ii. 20, *upon the Foundation.* (επι τω θεμελιω)

RECOLLECTIONS.

How endearing, august and awful are the Representations, Christ has made of himself, as the Angel of the Covenant, with a Rainbow on his Head, and a Countenance as bright and dazling as the Sun; And with Feet, like Pillars of fiery Metal standing on the Earth and Sea, and a Voice as loud and tremendous, as the roaring of a Lion! He is ever mindful of his Covenant with his People in the worst of Times; and amidst all the Troubles that are denounced to his Enemies, as with the Voice of Thunder, has all Things under his Dominion; and appears with illustrious Majesty for the Relief and Comfort of those that belong to him, and for the Terror and Destruction of his and their Enemies. These are Things worthy of the closest Meditation, that we may understand, and be suitably affected with them, as far as they are revealed, with a Commission from Christ to publish them, while secret Things are still to be left with him, till Time shall declare them. Though it cannot but be bitter to the Souls of true Believers to think of the severe Persecutions, which the Church is to expect under the Reign of Antichrist; yet what a softening to that Grief; what an Encouragement to Faith and Patience; and what a Pleasure must it be, to have realizing Prospects of the Care, that Christ will take of them, during their Tribulations, and of the happy Period he will put, in his appointed Time, to all their Sorrows, when they shall be turned into Joy and Praise, and his Kingdom shall be built up in its Purity and Glory, with wide Extent, upon the Ruins of all Antichristian-Powers! Then, as the Angel of the Covenant swore by the Creator of all Worlds, who lives for ever and ever, the Mystery of God, relating to his Dispensations of Providence and Grace, shall be finished; and all the Prophecies, which are now the Objects of the Faith and Hope of his People, shall be clearly explained, and actually fulfilled, to his Glory and their everlasting Triumph.

CHAP. XI.

The first general Description of the State of the Church for 1260 *Years, to be dated from the Rise of the temporal Power of the Pope about the Year* 756, *is represented under the Figure of a Temple measured, but the outward Court of which, as descriptive of formal Professors, is left to the* Gentiles, *or idolatrous Church of* Rome, *for* 42 *Months,* 1, 2. *During this Time, of equal Date with* 1260 *prophetic Days, or Years, two Witnesses, or a few, from Age to Age, prophesy in Sackcloth, but with great Power,* 3—6. *They are slain by popish Tyranny, which is figured out under the Image of the Beast, and are, in a Manner suppressed for three prophetic Days and a half, equal to the* 42 *Months; after which they arise and ascend to Heaven, as bearing their Testimony with greater Efficacy and Honour, than ever before, unto the Overthrow of a tenth Part of the* Romish *Jurisdiction and the Slaughter of* 7000 *Men, and to the Consternation of the rest of that Party, which puts an End to the second Wo,* 7—14; *And under the seventh Trumpet, denouncing the third Wo, all Antichristian Powers would be utterly destroyed, and issue in a glorious State of Christ's Kingdom upon Earth,* 15—19.

PERIOD. III.

TEXT.

1 *AND there was given me a Reed like unto a*

PARAPHRASE.

1. THEN, in Order to my having a general View of the true State both of the pure and the Antichristian-Church, methought, a Reed was put into my

Rod: And the Angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the Temple of God, and the Altar, and them that worship therein.

Hand, answering to the measuring Rod, and Line, which the Prophets, *Ezekiel* and *Zechariah*, saw in Vision for measuring the Temple and *Jerusalem.* (Ezek. xl. 3—5, and Zech. ii. 1, 2.) And the Angel of the Covenant, who had given me *the open little Book*, (Chap. xix. 8, &c.) standing near, said unto me, Arise; and with this Rod, which is a proper Emblem of the holy Scripture, as the Rule by which all Persons, Doctrines and Practices are to be tried, (*Isa.* viii. 20. and *Gal.* vi. 16.) take the just Dimensions of the true Gospel-Church, which is now the Temple of God, as his Habitation through the Spirit: (1 *Cor.* iii. 16, 17, and 2 *Cor.* vi. 16, and *Eph.* ii. 21, 22.) Measure likewise the Altar, at which they, as *a spiritual House and holy Priesthood, offer up spiritual Sacrifices* of Prayer and Praise, *acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*: (1 Pet. ii. 5.) And he further ordered me to take an exact Account of those of the visible Church, who worship God in Spirit and Truth, through Christ as their Altar, according to Gospel-Institution.

2 *But the Court which is without the Temple, leave out, and measure it not: for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy City shall they tread under Foot forty* and *two Months.*

2. But though the whole Temple at *Jerusalem* was measured, because all its Parts were to be intirely rebuilt; yet, said the Angel unto me (alluding to the outward Court of that Temple, (*Ezek.* xl. 17) where all *Israel* worshipped promiscuously) You shall not take in the Whole of the visible Church in your Measurement; but shall leave out such as don't agree to this Rule: Thereby intimating, that formal Professors, who answer to outward-Court Worshippers, should not be reckoned to the true Church of Christ, as being rejected of him: For, said he, that Part of the visible Church is permitted, by the righteous Judgment of God, to fall under the Power of Antichristian-*Rome*; which might fitly be stiled the *Gentiles*, as their idolatrous Worship of Saints, Angels and Images would resemble the Demon-Worship of the Heathens, and as many others of their religious Services would be derived from, and symbolize with them: And these *Gentilizing* Christians, as he further added, shall not only trample upon, oppress and persecute the pure Church, but also exercise a tyrannical Dominion over all Professors of the Christian-name, even as it was foretold that *Jerusalem* itself, the once holy City, should *be trodden down of the* Gentiles: *Luke* xxi. 24. (See the Note there) And the Continuance of their Power shall be for the Space of Twelve Hundred and Sixty Years, * which, in the Stile of Prophecy, are denoted by forty and two Months, reckoning each Month at thirty Days, and each Day for a Year. (See the Note on *Chap.* x. 6.)

3. But,

* This 1260 Years, as Mr. *Lowman* has observed, and I think shewn with strong Probability in his *Preface*, and in the *Contents* of this third Period, " is not to begin, till the imperial Government of *Rome* was passed away, as the preceding Forms of Government were before it, till another

3 *And I will give* Power *unto my two Witnesses, and they shall prophesy a Thousand two Hundred* and *threescore Days clothed in Sackcloth.*

3. But, notwithstanding all the Degeneracy and Oppressions of the Romish Church, I will raise up, give Commission and Authority to, and powerfully preserve and assist a competent, though small Number of faithful Servants to bear an honourable Witness to my Name and Gospel, and the Purity of my Institutions, in their Preaching, holy Profession, and Conversation, and to remonstrate against the Idolatry and other gross Corruptions of that apostate Church, in a Succession of them from Age to Age; † Which may be called *two Witnesses*, with Reference to the Validity of their Testimony to establish the Truth of what they declare; (See *Deut.* xvii. 6, and xix. 15, *Matth.* xviii. 16, and 2 *Cor.* xiii. 1.) and with an Allusion to some famous Pairs of Prophets in former Days: And these shall continue to bear a noble Testimony to me and my Cause through the whole Term of Antichrist's Reign, which will be Twelve Hundred and Sixty Days, reckoning each Day for a Year; and so will be exactly the same Period, but now signified (*ver.* 2.) by *forty and two Months.* (See the Note on *Chap.* x. 6.) In all which Time, as the antient Prophets and People of God used to wear Sackcloth, in Token of Mourning and Lamentation, in the Days of *Israel's* Affliction; so, in Allusion thereunto, these faithful Servants shall bravely maintain their Testimony in Circumstances as distressed and perilous, and with Hearts as deeply affected at the low and degenerate State of Religion, and at the afflictive Condition of the People of God under the Power of Persecutions, as though they were to manifest it by clothing themselves with Sackcloth.

4 *These are the two Olive-trees, and the two Candlesticks stand-*

4. These, how much soever they may be despised and oppressed by the apostate Church, are in high Honour and Esteem with God; and as *Zerubbabel* and *Joshua* the

ther Form of Government should be established in *Rome*, which, on some Accounts should be called the *Seventh*, and on other Accounts the *Eighth* Form of Government; when *Rome*, once the powerful Mistress of the World, after she had lost her Dominion, and seemed to lose it without Hope of Recovery, should be restored to Power and Empire again, which was to continue during the 1260 Days of this Period, and then to be utterly overthrown, and never to rise again."—" Now, (says he) as a great Variety of concurring Circumstances shew the Beginning of this Period, about the Year 756, when the Popes were invested with the temporal Dominion of *Rome*, in which only Time, the several Descriptions do all exactly agree; the 1260 Days of this Prophecy are to last so long as this Power is to continue: Which seems evidently to shew, that we are not to understand 1260 *natural* Days, the Time of this Period, but so many *prophetic* Days, in which a Day is given for a Year."

† These *two Witnesses* mean, not any *two particular Persons*, but a *Succession* of faithful Ministers: For their *prophesying* or *preaching* in Sackcloth was to last 1260 Years; and their being spoken of, as *Two*, may well be considered with respect to *the Sufficiency* of their Witness-bearing, and in Allusion to *Moses* and *Aaron*, the Deliverers of the Children of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, and Revivers of the Worship of God among them; to *Elijah* and *Elisha*, the Restorers of his Worship from *Baal's* Idolatry; and to *Zerubbabel* and *Joshua*, the Rebuilders of the Temple; all which Persons seem to be referred to, *ver.* 4, 5, 6. And, perhaps, it may point to some remarkable Pairs of Witnesses against Popish Corruptions, that should arise in a Succession of them, during this Period; such as the *Albigenses* and *Waldenses*; *John Huss* and *Jerom* of *Prague*; *Luther* and *Calvin*, and the like.

ing before the God of the Earth.

High Priest were compared to *two Olive Trees*, that fed the Lamps of the Temple with Oil, on Account of their employing all their Wisdom, Gifts and Graces, with which they were richly furnished, for rebuilding the Temple, and re-establishing the Worship of God in it, under the Influence of the Spirit of the Lord; (*Zech.* iv. 6—14.) So these Witnesses in Sackcloth shall be continually supplied with the Light and Assistances of the Spirit to enable them, amidst all their Trials, to minister the pure uncorrupted Gospel, for the Edification and Comfort of the Church, and for holding forth the Light of Truth and Holiness to the World, like Candles set on Candlesticks, (*Matth.* v. 14—16.) as becomes Servants standing in the Presence of the sovereign Lord of the whole Earth, to minister before him, with a Consciousness of his observing them, and with an humble Dependence on him for Protection, Assistance and Success.

5 *And if any Man will hurt them, Fire proceedeth out of their Mouth, and devoureth their Enemies: and if any Man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.*

5. And if any, through inveterate Prejudices against them and their Doctrine, shall set themselves to injure and distress them, and put an End to their Testimony, as *Ahaziah* did in the Case of *Elijah*, when to seize him he sent two Companies of Soldiers, which were consumed by Fire from Heaven, in Answer to his Prayer, and in Vindication of his righteous Cause; (2 *Kings* i. 10—12.) The Word of the Lord, in the Mouth of these two faithful Witnesses, shall be like Fire to devour their Enemies, (*Jer.* v. 12, 14.) as God will hear their Prayers under Oppression, and will certainly avenge them, in due Season, by executing the just Judgments they shall denounce in their Ministry, by his Authority, against their Antichristian-Persecutors: And if, notwithstanding all the solemn Warnings that shall be given, they will still persist in abusing them and obstructing their good Work, they shall sooner or later, in the Manner but now mentioned, find the dreadful Effects of it to their own Destruction; which is repeated, like the doubling of *Pharaoh's* Dream, because the Thing is certain. (*Gen.* xli. 32.)

6 *These have Power to shut Heaven, that it rain not in the Days of their Prophecy: and have Power over the Waters to turn them to Blood, and to smite the Earth with all Plagues, as often as they will.*

6. As the Prophet *Elijah* had Power with God by Prayer, in a Time of Drought and Famine, to stop the Bottles of Heaven, according to his Prediction, that Rain might not descend for the Space of three Years and six Months to make the Earth fruitful; (1 *Kings* xvii. 1, and *Jam.* v. 17) and as *Moses* and *Aaron* received Authority from God to turn the Waters of *Egypt* into Blood, (*Exod.* vii. 17) and to inflict any other Plague on that oppressive and persecuting People, which a divine Order directed them to: So these witness-bearing Servants were represented to me, as being so dear to God, and having such an Interest in him by the Prayer of Faith, as, during the Course of their Prophesying, to denounce against, and bring down upon their cruel Anti-

chriſtian-Enemies, ſuch terrible Puniſhments of a temporal and Spiritual Nature, whether by War or Famine, or withholding the Rain of his Word, Spirit and providential Bounties, as often as he ſees fit to order them to denounce either of thoſe Judgments againſt the Subjects of the Romiſh Dominion: And this he authorized them to do, with Effect upon them, for their obſtinate Wickedneſs, not from a Spirit of private Revenge, but for the Vindication of his own Honour, and of the Faithfulneſs and Importance of their Teſtimony.

7 And when they ſhall have finiſhed their Teſtimony, the Beaſt that aſcendeth out of the bottomleſs Pit ſhall make War againſt them, and ſhall overcome them, and kill them.

7. And during the Time of their Witneſs-bearing, till they ſhall have finiſhed their Teſtimony in Sackcloth, to Chriſt and his Goſpel, and againſt all Antichriſtian-Errors in Doctrine and Worſhip, through the forty and two Months, or twelve hundred and ſixty Years, the papal Tyranny or grand Antichriſt, which was repreſented to me under the Figure of a wild Beaſt, (τὸ θηρίον, ſee alſo *Chap.* xiii. 1, and xvii. 8) the ſame that was foretold by *the fourth Beaſt* in *Daniel*'s Propheey, (*Chap.* vii. 23—25) and derives his Power from Satan, like one that riſes up from the horrid unfathomable Abyſs of Hell: This cruel Beaſt, *whoſe coming will be after the Working of Satan*, (2 Theſſ. ii. 9) will make a furious Oppoſition to my Witneſſes, and will be ſuffered to prevail, by Stratagem and Violence, for a Time, againſt them, and deprive them of their civil and religious Liberties, and make great Slaughter of them *.

8. And

* Many learned Expoſitors underſtand this *ſlaying of the Witneſſes* to relate to ſome more than commonly ſevere Perſecutions of the Church, for three prophetic Days or Years and a half, (*ver.* 9) toward the Cloſe of the 1260 Years of Antichriſt's Reign, and of the Witneſſes propheſying in Sackcloth. But they are much divided in their Conjectures about *the Time* of this Event, whether it be already paſt, or yet to come. They, who ſuppoſe it to be already paſt, refer it to very different Inſtances of ſevere Perſecutions, which continued only three Years and a half. Some carry it ſo far back, as to the Council of *Conſtance*, about the Year 1414, when *John Huſs* and *Jerome* of *Prague* were put to Death; others refer it to the *Smalcaldic* War in *Germany*, about 1547; others, to the Popiſh Perſecution in Queen *Mary*'s Days in *England*, about the Year 1553; others, to the Maſſacre of the Proteſtants in *France*, 1572; and others, to the Cruelties exerciſed on the *Vaudois* in *Piedmont*, under the Duke of *Savoy*, about 1685: All which remarkable Perſecutions laſted about *three Years and a half.* And ſeveral of theſe Expoſitors ſuppoſe, though not very conſiſtently with their own Schemes, that *the Reſurrection of the Witneſſes* was at the Time of the *Proteſtant-Reformation*; whereas moſt of the Facts, to which they apply the *ſlaying of the Witneſſes* were after the Reformation commenced: Others of them, who alſo take the three *Days* and a half (*ver.* 9) to ſignify in prophetic Stile three *Years* and a half, think that the *ſlaying of the Witneſſes*, and conſequently their *riſing* and *aſcending* is ſtill to come, toward *the Cloſe* of the 1260 Years, or 42 Months of their propheſying in Sackcloth: For they apprehend that the Witneſſes are not yet riſen, and advanced to ſo great Power and Honour, as is ſignified by their *ſtanding on their Feet*, and *aſcending up to Heaven*; and that no ſuch Blow has hitherto been given to Popery, as is repreſented to be the immediate Conſequence of their *riſing* and *aſcending*. All this ſhews the extreme Uncertainty that attends every Gueſs about the *ſlaying*, *riſing* and *aſcending* of the Witneſſes, upon the Foot of underſtanding the *three Days and a half* to mean only *three Years and a half.* But all theſe Controverſies about it are effectually ſuperſeded, if (as ſeems to me moſt likely) we reſolve the three Days and a half into prophetic Days of Years, and then the three Years and a half into an Agreement with *the Time, and Times,* and *half a Time* in this Book, (*Chap.* xii. 14) and in *Daniel*'s Propheſy, (*Chap.* xii. 6, 7) and ſo make them equal to the prophetic 42 *Months* and 1260 *Days*. (See the Note on *Chap.* x. 6.) This makes the general Deſcriptions of this Period intirely uniform: And the Words *when they ſhall have finiſhed their Teſtimony*

ſeem

8 *And their dead Bodies* shall lie *in the Street of the great City, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.*

8. And as it is the highest Instance of merciless Barbarity, to deny dead Bodies a Burial, and leave them shamefully exposed in public Places of Concourse; so, to shew the most malignant Inhumanity and Indignity against these Witnesses, they will not only be slain, in a political, and many of them in a literal Sense; but will be exposed to open Contempt and Ignominy in the popish Dominion, which is of large Extent, and has for its Capital the great City of *Rome*; (Chap. xvi. 19, and xvii. 18, and xviii. 10—16, 18, 21) which in a mystical Sense may be called *Sodom* for its Pride, Filthiness and Wickedness, and *Egypt* for its Tyranny, Oppression and Idolatry; and may be compared to *Jerusalem*, which killed the Prophets, and, when under the *Roman*-Jurisdiction, put our blessed Lord to the shameful and painful Death of the Cross, and afterward crucified him afresh in the Martyrdom of his Members, which will be acted over again by these cruel Persecutors.

9 *And they of the People, and Kindreds, and Tongues, and Nations, shall see their dead Bodies three Days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead Bodies to be put in Graves.*

9. And this will be counted such a Triumph of the Antichristian-Power over the Saints,† that the Subjects of its Dominion, wheresoever they dwell in different Countries of various Tribes, Languages and Nations, will barbarously insult over them, as seeing them exposed, with as much Ignominy, Abhorrence and Inhumanity, as though they were loathsome Carcases kept above Ground, and not suffered to be decently interred, during the Period of their prophesying in Sackcloth, which may be called three Days and a half, in Allusion to the Time, that unburied dead Bodies may ordinarily be kept, without offensive Putrefaction, and which in prophetic Stile is answerable to *a Time, Times, and half a Time*, another prophetic Number, parallel to *forty and two Months*, or *twelve hundred and sixty Days*. (See the Note on *ver.* 7.)

10 *And they that dwell upon the Earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send Gifts one to another; because*

10. And the Inhabitants of the papal Territories will be mightily pleased at the inhuman Treatment of the slain Witnesses; and, as though the Day were now absolutely their own, will congratulate one another, and go into all Sorts of Merriment and Feasting, and *sending Portions one to another, and Gifts to the Poor*, as if, like the Day of the

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(οταν τελεσωσι) may, according to the Latitude of the *Tense* and *Particle*, signify, *while they are*, or *shall be performing their Testimony*: For (οταν) *when* sometimes signifies *while*, as in *Matth.* xxiv. 32; and *finished* is render'd *performed*, Luke ii. 39.——But if, as some suppose, the Words may be render'd, *When they shall be about to finish their Testimony*, or toward the Close of the Period for the Witnesses prophesying in Sackcloth, which I apprehend is not yet expired, then this *slaying them* must still be to come. And it seems not improbable but that the last Efforts of Antichristian-Powers may be the most terrible and prevalent of all, that have gone before it since the Reformation.

† Some by *the People, that should see their dead Bodies, and not suffer them to be put in Graves*, understand their *kind Protestant Friends*, who would not suffer them to be buried, in Hopes of their reviving again. But it seems more suitable to the following Verse, and the whole Tenor of this general Description of the *mournful State* of the Witnesses, while prophesying in Sackcloth, to understand it as meaning their barbarous *Popish Enemies*; And yet it must be owned, that the other Sense suggests great Encouragement to the Church under all their suffering Circumstances, on Supposition that it is to be confined to Times after the *Reformation*.

these two Prophets tormented them that dwelt on the Earth.

Jews Deliverance from their Enemies, (*Esth.* ix. 22) this were to be observed as a Time of Thanksgiving to God; because they had brought down the faithful Monitors, that filled the Subjects of the Antichristian Empire with intolerable Vexation, by testifying both openly and practically, by Preaching and Example, against their abominable Corruptions in Doctrine, Worship and Manners; and by denouncing the Judgments of God, which would come upon them, on that Account.

11 And after three Days and an half, the Spirit of Life from God entered into them; and they stood upon their Feet, and great Fear fell upon them which saw them.

11. But in vain will they imagine themselves secure from being ever troubled again with a Revival of the Cause, which they thought was so thoroughly suppressed, as to be past all Likelihood of Recovery: For, after the Expiration of the above-mentioned Period, which, though consisting of twelve Hundred and sixty Years, may, in a Way of computing prophetic Numbers, be expressed, as it has been but now (*ver.* 9.) by three Days and an half, (See the Note on *ver.* 7.) Methought I saw the quickning Spirit, which, proceeding from God, entered into, raised up and animated a Succession of faithful Witnesses to this same glorious Cause, of the same Principles and Temper with those that had gone before them, as *John* the *Baptist* came in the Spirit and Power of *Elias*, and for that Reason bore his Name: (*Luke* i. 17, and *Matth.* xi. 14, and xvii. 11, 12.) And they stood with Strength, Courage and Vigour on their Feet, like Persons raised in full Health from the Dead, and ready to engage in any Service that God should call them to, as *Israel*'s Restoration was represented in *Ezekiel*'s Vision under the Figure of a *Resurrection* of dry Bones, and of their standing upon their Feet. (*Chap.* xxxvii. 1—10.) And at their Enemies seeing this unexpected wonderful Alteration, they were terribly afraid of being tormented by these Witnesses, more than ever before.

12 And they heard a great Voice from Heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to Heaven in a Cloud; and their Enemies beheld them.

12. And for the further Encouragement of these risen Witnesses, methought, I heard a loud Voice call to them from Heaven, the Throne of God's Glory, saying, Come up hither; by which was signified, that God would visibly take them into his special Protection, and would assist, own and honour them with great Success in his Work and Cause: And thereupon, methought, in Allusion to Christ's visible Ascension to Heaven in a Cloud after his Resurrection from the Dead, they ascended up to Heaven in the Midst of a bright Cloud, to signify God's exalting them to eminent Dignity, Power and Prosperity, according to the metaphorical Sense, in which the Scripture uses such Terms; (*Isa.* xiv. 13, and *Matth.* xi. 23.) and their Enemies could not but see what a glorious Change was made in their Circumstances, and what a signal Testimony of Favour and Honour God had therein given to them.

13 And the same Hour was there a great Earthquake, and

13. And, at the very same Time, there were strong Convulsions and Confusions in the civil and ecclesiastical Affairs

the tenth Part of the City fell, and in the Earthquake were slain of Men seven Thousand: And the Remnant were affrighted, and gave Glory to the God of Heaven.

of the Antichristian Nations, which were represented under the Emblem of a great Earthquake, like that which attended the Resurrection of our Lord; (*Matth.* xxviii. 2.) and by Means thereof a very considerable Body, which may be called a tenth Part, of the papal Jurisdiction fell off from it. † And, in the Midst of these Commotions, a great Number of their Party, like seven Thousand Men of Name, Power and Influence, (ονοματα ανθρωπων) together with their Dependents, fell in Battle: And the Remainder of them were astonished and terrified, and forced to own, to the Glory of the only true God, whose Throne is established in Heaven, that there was an extraordinary Appearance of his Power and Providence in Favour of his Church, and against his popish Enemies; and by Means of preaching the Gospel, in Concurrence with his Spirit and his amazing Providence, they were converted from Superstition and Idolatry, to the Glory of God, in an Acknowledgment of the Truth, as it is in Jesus.

14 *The second Wo is past*; and *behold, the third Wo cometh quickly.*

14. This brings us to the End of the *second* great Wo, that had been threatned by the *sixth* Angel: (Chap. ix. 13, &c.) And Observe, with Attention and reverend Awe, the *third* and *last* Wo will be immediately denounced by the *seventh* Angel.

15 *And the seventh Angel sounded; and there were great Voices in Heaven, saying, The Kingdoms of this World are become* the Kingdoms *of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*

TRUMPET VII, being the *third* and *last Wo-Trumpet.*] 15. Then the *seventh* Angel blew his Trumpet, which was to be followed with Effusions of the *seven Vials*, (Chap. xvi.) that would bring about the intire Ruin of the Antichristian-State of *Rome*; and, immediately upon this Notice of it, there were loud Acclamations of Joy and Praise among the Witnesses that ascended up to Heaven, (*ver.* 12.) saying, Now the long looked for, and earnestly desired Time is come, in which all the Kingdoms of this World, and particularly those that had been under Antichrist's Dominion before, are brought into a spiritual, cheerful and holy Subjection, as Nations devoted to God and to his Messiah; they being made a willing People in the Day of his Power: And he, who has set up his Throne in great Glory among them, shall rule over them by his Word, Spirit, Providence, and Scepter of Righteousness, as their King; and he shall reign in this Manner upon Earth, till the utmost Period of this glorious Dispensation, and afterwards under a different

† The Account given in the Paraphrase of the *tenth Part of the City*, and *seven Thousand Men*, as meaning a considerable Part of the *Romish Jurisdiction*, and *principal Men* in it, appears to me as probable, as any of the numerous Conjectures that have been made about it. Some fix upon one, and others upon another of the ten Kingdoms, into which the western Empire was divided, after it became Antichristian. But, as far as I see, we must wait for *the Event* to determine it, since this Part of the general View of the Prophecy seems to be not yet fulfilled: And the same may be said with respect to the Sentiments of others, who think that by the *tenth Part of the City* is meant *Rome* itself, which is now but a tenth Part of what it was at the Time of this Prophecy. But be these Guesses as they will, I take the tenth Part of the City's *falling*, and seven Thousand being *slain*, to signify some very great Downfal of popish Powers, that is immediately to succeed the 1260 Years of the Beast's Reign and of the Witnesses prophesying in Sackcloth, and to be completed by the pouring out of the *seven Vials* under the *seventh Trumpet*: (Chap. xvi.) For the Numbers *Seven* and *Ten* are often used to signify *many*, as in *Job* v. 19, *Psal.* lxxix. 12, *Luke* xvii. 4, *Gen.* xxxi. 7, 1 *Sam.* i. 8, and *Eccles.* vii. 19.

Form,

Form, in Heaven, together with his Father and Spirit to all Eternity.

16 *And the four and twenty Elders which sat before God on their Seats, fell upon their Faces, and worshipped God,*

17 *Saying, We give thee Thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great Power, and hast reigned.*

16, 17. And, upon hearing these glad Tidings of great Joy, the four and twenty Elders, or Representatives of the Church, which were seated with Honour, Dignity and Delight on their Thrones in the immediate Presence of God, (*Chap.* iv. 4.) rose from their Seats; and, prostrating themselves with deep Humility and Reverence, paid their solemn Adorations to God the Son, together with the Father, † saying, We bless thy holy and glorious Name, and pay our cheerful and grateful Acknowledgments to thee, O thou eternal and almighty Jehovah, the Sovereign Lord of all, and, together with thy Father, the only true God, (See the Notes on *Chap.* i. 4, 8.) who from everlasting to everlasting art unchangeably the same in thy Being and Perfections, Counsels, Engagements and Covenant, as God; and art *the same Yesterday, and to Day, and for ever,* as Mediator; (*Heb.* xiii. 8.) We solemnly adore and praise thee; because thou hast now eminently assumed and asserted thy natural and Office-Right and Authority, to exercise universal Dominion for the Good of thy Church; and hast reigned, by thy providential Dispensations, with great Power and Righteousness over all thine Enemies; and, by thy Grace, over all thy People in the most conspicuous, effectual and extensive Manner.

18 *And the Nations were angry, and thy Wrath is come, and the Time of the Dead that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give Reward unto thy Servants the Prophets, and to the Saints, and them that fear thy Name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the Earth.*

18. And we bless thy divine Majesty, that though the Nations, which were subject to Antichristian-Powers, were enraged against, and cruelly persecuted thy Witnesses, and were filled with Indignation at thy appearing for their Rescue; yet their glorious Cause is now judged; thy righteous Vengeance is executed upon those that oppressed them, and repented not of their evil Deeds; and thy appointed Time, the set-Time for favouring Sion, is now come, that thou should'st avenge the Quarrel of thy Covenant in reviving, owning and honouring those, who in a civil Sense were dead, and in vindicating the Characters of thy holy Martyrs who were faithful unto Death; and that thou should'st bestow gracious Rewards of full Liberty, Peace and Prosperity, in the Enjoyment of all Gospel-Ordinances and Privileges, upon thy ministring Servants, who in their own Persons, or in their Predecessors, or both, made known thy Will and preached thy pure Gospel, in mournful Circumstances, at the Peril of their Lives; and not upon them only, but upon all thy People, whom thou hast set apart and sanctified for thyself, and who worship thee with a reverential Fear of thy

† I think that all the following Descriptions of the divine Person here spoken of, may in an especial Manner point us to the Lord Christ, as most immediately intended in this Ascription of Glory, though not to the Exclusion of the eternal Father, to whom, together with the Son, the Kingdoms of this World will be brought into Subjection, when Christ shall *take to himself his great Power and Reign*; which seems most evidently to be spoken of, by way of Eminence, as the Time of his glorious Kingdom upon the Earth.

holy Name, whether they be weaker or stronger Believers, or Persons of lower or higher Rank and Station in the Church, or in the World; and that thou should'st render Tribulation to those Antichristian-Enemies who troubled them; and bring utter Destruction upon those, who in their Day, by false Doctrine, Fraud and Violence, corrupted, plundered and destroyed the Inhabitants of the Earth.

19 *And the Temple of God was opened in Heaven, and there was seen in his Temple the Ark of his Testament: And there were Lightnings and Voices, and Thunderings, and an Earthquake, and great Hail.*

19. And as the Temple at *Jerusalem*, which was the Seat of public Worship, and a Type of the New Testament-Church, appeared in all its Glory, when the Veil was turn'd aside to give an open View of the Holy of Holies, and of the Ark of the Covenant, with the Mercy-Seat and Cherubim upon it, which were Emblems of the Divine Presence; so I had a Vision of the Temple, and all Things in it, as exposed to my Sight, without the Interposition of a Veil, to intimate the exceeding Light, Liberty and Glory, with which God's spiritual Temple, his Church on Earth, should appear in this happy State of it: And this glorious Revolution was represented to me, as attended with such heavy and destructive Judgments upon the Enemies of Christ and his Church, as may fitly be compared to the most terrible Tempests of Lightning, and Roarings in the Air, and Claps of Thunder; and to the Shocks, Overthrows and Ruins of a universal Earthquake, and Storms of prodigious Hailstones, as if the Dissolution of all Things were at hand.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How certainly may we conclude, that the Wickedness of the Wicked shall have an End, and that God will establish the Just! When he appropriates a peculiar People to himself, according to the Rule of his Word, he will separate the precious from the vile, and make no Account of carnal Professors, whom he will leave to the Power of Anti-christian Enemies: But he will always have a Seed to serve him, and bear Witness to him and his Gospel, though in mournful Circumstances, like Persons clothed in Sackcloth, through the whole Period of Popish Tyranny, Superstition and Idolatry, which was to last Twelve Hundred and Sixty Years. His faithful Witnesses shall, nevertheless, stand all that while with Acceptance before him, and be the Means of conveying Light and Influence in the true Church of Christ. But woe to those who, like Antichristian-*Rome*, (which may well be compared to *Sodom* and *Egypt* for Wickedness, Persecution and Idolatry) set themselves against these Witnesses, to oppress, silence and slay them. God will take their Part, and bring down heavy Vengeance upon the Heads of all their Enemies: And though he may suffer them, for an appointed Season, to be *politically*, and some of their Number *corporally* slain, and their Cause to be in great Measure suppressed, by the Beast which rose out of the bottomless Pit; and to be treated with Inhumanity and Indignity under the Jurisdiction of *Rome*, and insulted with Mirth and Triumph by Multitudes of that Party, which could not tell how to bear the stinging Admonition and Reproof of their holy Doctrines, Examples, Prayers, and Threatnings of divine Judgments; They shall have a rising, ascending and flourishing State of Security and Honour, by the Power of God's Spirit, and the Workings of his Providence, to their own exceeding Joy, and to the Envy and Vexation of their Enemies. And ah! How will many of their Persecutors be then affrighted at the Thought of what they have done against the faithful Servants of the Lord, and at the Desolation then coming upon themselves! Happy will it be for those, whose Fright shall end in a thorough Conversion, and in giving Glory to God. And O what a blessed Time will that be, when the Power of Popery shall be totally reduced, and the King-

doms of this World shall become the Kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ! Then the glorious Privileges of the Gospel-Church shall open in Light and Liberty, Purity and Peace, in delightful Communion with God, and in Holiness of Heart and Life; and then their Lord and Saviour, who is the eternal and almighty God together with the Father, will vindicate their righteous Cause, and bountifully reward his suffering Servants with the Smiles of Providence and Grace; and will pour Destruction upon all Antichristian-Powers at the End of their Twelve Hundred and Sixty Years Reign, who had been the Plague of the Earth: And this he will do by Methods, as terrible as the most shocking Tempests of Thunder, Lightning, Hail and Earthquakes can possibly figure out to us. The Hope of this complete Deliverance of the Church is their Support and Comfort in all preceding Tribulations; and when Christ shall take to himself his great Power and Reign, to the intire Destruction of his Enemies, and Happiness of them that love and fear him, then all his People on Earth will join the heavenly Chorus in animated Thanksgivings and Praises to him, who shall reign for ever and ever.

CHAP. XII.

A second general Description of the same Period of the Church of Christ, and of the Popish Empire, under the Figures of a Woman driven into the Wilderness, but preserved in Safety there, and of a great red Dragon, meaning the Devil, as exerting his Power principally by the Pope and his Party, who would persecute her 1260 *prophetic Days or Years,* 1—6. Michael *and his Angels fight against the Devil and his Angels, who are defeated; upon which there are loud Acclamations of Joy and Praise, attended with a Denunciation of Wo to the Inhabitants of the Earth, by reason of the Devil's or Dragon's* Rage, 7—12. *Hereupon the Dragon persecutes the Church, which is hid from him, and is nourished for a Time, Times and half a Time, answering to* 1260 *prophetic Days,* 13, 14. *He endeavours to destroy her, as by a Flood, which is swallowed up by some civil Powers, stiled the Earth; and, being thus disappointed, he renews his War against the Remnant of her Seed,* 15—17.

TEXT.

1 *AND there appeared a great Wonder in Heaven; a Woman clothed with the Sun, and the Moon under her Feet, and upon her Head a Crown of twelve Stars;*

PARAPHRASE.

1. AND in another general View, which was given me of the State of the Church, and of its Antichristian-Enemies, for the Space of Twelve Hundred and Sixty Years, there was represented to me a very remarkable significant Figure (σημειον) in Heaven, * portending great Events; which was of a Woman most gloriously adorned, a fit Emblem of Christ's Church or Spouse, as highly honoured of God: She appeared as surrounded with Rays of illustrious Brightness, like the Sun; which may signify her having put on Christ and his Righteousness, and being irradiated with the Light of Truth, Comfort and Holiness, as derived from *the Sun of Righteousness, which arose upon her*

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* By *Heaven* some understand *the Place* where the Apostle had his Vision; others, *the Air*; others, the *Church*, which is *the Kingdom of Heaven* on Earth. But, being uncertain in which of these Senses it is to be taken, the Paraphrase leaves it undetermined.

with Healing in his Wings: (Malac. iv. 2.) And the Moon was represented as placed under her Feet; Which may be considered as an Emblem of her Elevation above the obscure Light of Mosaic Rites and Ceremonies, and of her trampling, with holy Indifference and Contempt, upon all the Enjoyments of this World, both of which are as changeable and deficient as the Moon, that has no Light but what it borrows from the Sun. And there was the Appearance of a Crown upon her Head, bespangled with twelve bright Stars, instead of so many brilliant Diamonds, to intimate that all her Light of Knowledge and Grace was communicated, as a Crown of Glory to her, by Means of, and according to the Doctrine of the Twelve Apostles.

2 And she being with Child, cried, travailing in Birth, and pained to be delivered.

2. And, methought, this wonderfully remarkable Woman, appearing to be big with Child, cried out, as in the Throws and Pangs of a Woman in Labour, just ready, and earnestly longing, to be delivered; * which in figurative Language (*Isa.* liv. 1, and lxvi. 7, 8, 9.) signifies the strong Groanings, eager Desires, wrestling Prayers, and indefatigable Labours of the Church, under sharp Persecutions, for a numerous Offspring of Converts, that *Christ*, in his Doctrine and Image, *might be form'd in them,* (Gal. iv. 19.) and they might *be born of God.* (1 Joh. v. 1, 4.)

3 And there appeared another Wonder in Heaven, and behold, a great red Dragon, having seven Heads, and ten Horns, and seven Crowns upon his Heads.

3. And while the Woman was in Travail, I saw, in my Vision, another significant Sign of a contrary Nature in Heaven: (See the Note on *ver.* 1.) And, behold! with Wonder and Amazement, it was the Figure of a great red Dragon, which represented the Devil, (*ver.* 9.) as a powerful, cruel and and savage Adversary, all over stain'd with the Blood of Martyrs, especially by Popish Instruments, to whom *he gave his Power*; (Chap. xiii. 2.) Accordingly the Dragon, as acting in and by them, was represented to me under the Form of a strange Monster with seven Heads and ten Horns, and seven Crowns upon his Heads; By which may be signified the Pope, as invested with temporal, as well as spiritual Empire, whose Seat would be at *Rome*, which stands upon seven Mountains; and whose Dominion would be the seventh Form of supreme Government; *(Chap.* xvii. 9—12.) † and who would have a powerful Rule, of which Horns

* *Being with Child* and *travailling in Birth* are beautiful Figures, by which the Church is represented in Scripture, as bringing forth a spiritual Offspring: Accordingly *Jerusalem* is called *the Mother of us all*; and, with a prophetic View to the Glory of the Gospel-Church, *Of Zion it shall be said, This and that Man was born in her,* &c. (*Ps.* lxxxvii. 5, 6.) and, *as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her* Children. (*Isa.* lxvi. 8.)

† The Description of this *great red Dragon* is so near a-kin to that, which is given of *the Beast*, Chap. xiii. 1, and xvii. 9—11, that one would think we could not easily miss of seeing the same Power to be intended by both. (See the Note on *Chap.* xi. 2.) There is only one Difference in these figurative Representations of *the Dragon*, and *the Beast*, Chap. xiii. 1. The Dragon here appeared with *seven Crowns on his seven Heads*, and the Beast there with *ten on his ten Horns*. Perhaps, the Reason of that Variation may be; because while the Heathen *Roman*-Empire subsisted, and, as such, persecuted the Church, *Rome* alone had the imperial Dignity, and the Ten Kingdoms were only

Horns are an Emblem, over the ten Kingdoms, into which the *Roman*-Empire would before that Time be divided; and would exercise royal Authority with great Extent; the Emblem of which are seven Crowns set on these seven Heads, to denote that all the Power of the former Governments of *Rome* would center in him.

4 And his Tail drew the third Part of the Stars of Heaven, and did cast them to the Earth. And the Dragon stood before the Woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her Child as soon as it was born.

4. And by Means of his Agents and Followers, Persecutions and corrupt Doctrines, which for their Power and Malignity, may be compared to a great Dragon's Tail, this Monster swept away a considerable Number of ecclesiastical sons from their spiritual Stations in the Church, drawing them into Superstition and Idolatry, and throwing them down from a Pursuit of heavenly Views to an Attachment to earthly Things; such as the Riches, Honours and Pleasures of this World. And while the Church was labouring with great Difficulty and earnest Desire, like a Woman in Travail, to propagate pure and undefiled Religion, and make sincere Converts to Christ, the furious Dragon, who as a *roaring Lion walks about, seeking whom he may devour*, (1 Pet. v. 8.) narrowly watched her, like one standing just before her, to see when she should bring forth her beloved Offspring, that he might immediately tear it in Pieces, as soon as ever it should be born into the World; Which may be considered as a lively Figure of the implacable and powerful Opposition of Satan, and of those that are under his Influence, against the Kingdom and Gospel of Christ, to prevent their Progress in the Earth.

5 And she brought forth a Man-child, who was to rule all Nations with a Rod

5. And yet, according to the painful, laborious and hopeful Desires of the Church, she brought forth a Seed to serve Christ; which in prophetic Stile may be called her being *delivered of a Man-Child*, (Isa. vi. 7, 8.) † as a Succession

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only Provinces under her. But, when the Empire became *Antichristian*, those Provinces were formed into distinct *Kingdoms*; and so are represented as *crowned*, though still in a Dependence on the Pope, *Chap.* xvii. 9—13. However, as the *Crowns* and *Horns* in both are Emblems of *royal Dignity and Power*; and as seven is a *Number of Perfection*, and all the Heads were *crowned*, the general Meaning of the Symbols is the same: But whatever Difficulty there may be, in assigning any particular Reason of this Difference in the figurative Representations, (which is of no great Importance, while the general View is the same) all the Heads being *crowned* is a considerable Objection against the common Interpretation of the *seven Heads*, as relating to the *seven Forms of Government*, that should succeed one another in the *Roman*-Empire; such as *Kings*, *Consuls*, *Dictators*, *Tribunes*, *Decemvirs*, *Emperors*, and *Popes*: For I cannot find that the *Consuls*, *Dictators*, *Tribunes* and *Decemvirs*, though supreme Magistrates, were ever *crowned*; whereas our Prophecy expresly exhibits *all* the seven Heads as alike crowned; and the Papal Head over them may be considered as a seventh Form of supreme Government. (See the Note on *Chap.* xvii. 9.)

† By the *Man-child*, which the Church brought forth, Interpreters generally understand *Constantine* the Great, who was exalted to the imperial Throne, established Christianity, and ruled all Nations with a Rod of Iron, unto the subduing of Heathen-Pesecution and Idolatry, and utterly overthrowing the Devil's Tyranny, together with the idolatrous Priests and Persecutors, among the *Pagans*. And, I confess, there seems to be something so natural in this, and in a correspondent Interpretation of *ver.* 7, 8, that I should strongly incline to go into it, were it not that I cannot but take this, as well as the 11th and 13th Chapters, to be a general Representation of the State of the Church, during the 1260 Years of her being in the Wilderness, and of Antichrist's Reign. (See the Notes on *Chap.* x. 6, and xi. 7.) But as upon every Scheme, except that of *Grotius* and *Hammond*, which

of Iron: and her Child was caught up unto God, and to his Throne.

Succession of faithful Believers should be thereby propagated in the Church, in spite of all the malicious Designs and Attempts of the Devil and his Instruments; insomuch that, instead of its being utterly extirpated from the Earth, it should finally prevail, under Christ its Head, to break to Pieces all the Powers of its Enemies, and rule over them with invincible Strength and Firmness, as with an Iron-Scepter: And, in the mean while, this lovely Birth was taken under the immediate Care and Protection of God for its Preservation, like one raised above the Reach of its most powerful and inveterate Enemies, and lodged secretely as it were, before his Throne in Heaven; as *Joash* was hid in the Temple of the Lord six Years, that the idolatrous *Athaliah* might not murder him. (2 *Chron.* xxii. 11, 12, and xxiii. 11—13.)

6 And the Woman fled into the Wilderness, where she hath a Place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore Days.

6. And the Church herself, signified by the Parent-Woman, (*ver.* 1, 2.) was taken effectual Care of, as well as those that were *born* to God *in her, whom the Highest himself would establish,* (Pf. lxxxvii. 5, 6.) *and the Gates of Hell should not prevail against*; (Matth. xvi. 18.) though, in Order to her Preservation, she was forced to retire into Obscurity, as into a wild and solitary Desart, exposed to many Difficulties and Dangers, as *Israel* were in the Wilderness, where God by his kind Providence had prepared a Place of Retreat and Refreshment for them, that as he there fed them with *Manna*; so his ministring Servants should *feed her with Knowledge and Understanding*, as *Pastors according to his own Heart* (Jer. iii. 15.) for the whole Space of his Witnesses prophesying in Sackcloth, which was to be twelve Hundred and sixty Years. (See the Notes on *Chap.* x. 6, and xi. 3.)

7 And there was War in Heaven; Michael and his Angels

7. And a further Representation was made to me of the State of the Church, during this Period, under the Emblem of a terrible War figured out by one in the Air; * wherein

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(which evidently gives by far too short a Time for the numerous Events assigned to this Period) all Protestants must allow that *Constantine*'s Reign was long before this Period commenced; and as the prophetic Language is all *figurative*, it seems requisite, for making the general compendious View in this and the preceding and following Chapters uniform, to give those figurative Representations such a Turn, as may best comport with the Events, that were to come to pass in the Time marked out by the Prophecy itself, relating to the 1260 Years, or *Time, Times and half a Time* of the Church's being in the Wilderness, *ver.* 6, 14: Otherwise, I cannot conceive, why these Numbers are mentioned in this Chapter at all; nor why *the Dragon* is represented, as having *ten Horns*, and *seven Heads and Crowns*, ver. 3. (See the Note there) I have therefore fixed upon such an Application of Events in this Chapter as is intirely consistent with the two other general Views of this Period, that are given in the two Chapters, between which this stands. And though, as far as I know, my Thoughts upon it may be in great Measure singular; yet they lie easy before my Mind, and are humbly submitted to the Judgment of the Reader.

* *In Heaven* I here take to mean the *aerial Heaven*; because the Devil is stiled *the Prince of the Power of the Air*. (Eph. ii. 2.) and the Apostle speaks (*Chap.* vi. 12.) of *spiritual Wickedness in high or heavenly Places*, (ἐπουρανίοις) But this may be considered as emblematical of the Combates, that are carried on by Christ (who, as many good Expositors understand it, is signified by *Michael*) and his People, on one Hand; and by Satan and his popish Adherents, on the other. Or, perhaps, by *Heaven* here, and in *ver.* 8, 10, may be meant *the Church of Christ* on Earth.

 Michael,

fought against the Dragon, and the Dragon fought and his Angels,

Michael, the sovereign Prince, Lord and Head of the Angels, (*Dan.* xii. 1, and *Jude* ver. 9.) and his Servants, whether ministring Spirits, or Gospel-Preachers, engaged in Battle against the great Dragon or the Devil; and this furious Enemy exerted all his Power at the Head of, and in Conjunction with, his Demons in Hell, and his Emissaries, false Teachers and their Followers on Earth, in Opposition to them.

8 *And prevailed not; neither was their Place found any more in Heaven.*

8. And the Issue of the Combate was, that the Dragon and his Forces could not carry their Point for destroying them; so far from it, that they were absolutely defeated in that Design, and lost all their Authority in the true Church of Christ, as being overcome by their Faith and Patience, and by the Breakings out of the Light of the Gospel; Which might point to *the Protestant-Reformation*, when the Gospel had a wonderful Spread, and several States and Kingdoms threw off the Antichristian-Yoke.

9 *And the great Dragon was cast out, that old Serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole World: he was cast out into the Earth, and his Angels were cast out with him.*

9. And the great Dragon himself, at the Head of his formidable Army, was turned out of the Dominion, which he before had assumed over those Vassals, that were now delivered out of his Kingdom, who, as long ago, as the Fall of the human Race, beguiled *Eve*, through his Subtilty, under the Form of a Serpent; (*Gen.* iii. 4, and 2 *Cor.* xi. 3.) who is often called in Scripture *the Devil*, and, according to the Signification of that Word, is a malicious and false *Accuser of the Brethren*; (ver. 10.) and is properly stiled *Satan*, who, as that Name signifies, is an inveterate and implacable Adversary to them; and by his serpentine Craft, betrays the carnal People of all Nations into Error and Idolatry, and every other Kind of abominable Evil: This malicious and powerful Adversary had a great Downfal in my Vision, like one who tumbles headlong from Heaven to Earth; and his Agents and Emissaries, as acting under his Influence, were cast down from their former Power and Authority with him; Thereby intimating that Christ and his Church, in the Days of *the Reformation*, should prevail against the Devil and all his Instruments, notwithstanding the subtle and furious Opposition, that would then be made by Antichristian-Powers against the reformed Religion among them.

10 *And I heard a loud Voice saying in Heaven, Now is come Salvation and Strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the Power of his Christ: for the Accuser of our Brethren is cast down, which accused them*

10. Hereupon, methought, I heard a loud Acclamation of melodious Thanksgiving, Joy and Praise in the heavenly Assembly, with which the Church on Earth cheerfully joined, saying, Now is a Time of great Deliverance to the true Church of Christ from its idolatrous and persecuting Enemies, and of its Prosperity and Safety; now has God shewn himself strong on behalf of his People; and now is the Gospel-Kingdom of our God highly exalted in the Light and Purity of its Doctrines and Institutions; and now the Power and Authority (ἐξουσία) of his Messiah,

before our God Day and Night.

as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, is set up and manifested in great Glory: For the Devil, that grand Adversary of the Christian-Brethren, is dethroned and defeated in his Designs, who sought all Opportunities, by his Instruments, of laying Crimes to their Charge, which they were innocent of, to furnish their Antchristian-Enemies with unjust Pretences for oppressing them; and who was so insolent as, speaking after the Manner of Man, unweariedly to bring false Accusations of them, on all Occasions, by Day and Night, before our reconciled God, to try whether he could not provoke his Wrath against them, as he attempted to do against his Servant *Job*, (Chapts. i. ii.) and against *Joshua* the High Priest. (*Zech.* iii. 1.) For all this signal Victory, we exult and triumph, and glorify the Name of the Lord.

11 *And they overcame him by the Blood of the Lamb, and by the Word of their Testimony; and they loved not their Lives unto the Death.*

11. And we cheerfully adore and bless him, in Reflection that his Saints have gained this glorious Conquest over their great Adversary, the Devil, as working by Popish Powers; which they have done, not by any Strength or Wisdom of their own, but merely through Faith in the Blood of the Lamb, who was slain, and offered up himself an atoning Sacrifice for them; and by Means of *the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God*, (Eph. vi. 17) through their stedfast Adherence to it, Dependence upon it, and open Profession of it, in its uncorrupted Purity, which they faithfully bore Witness to in their Doctrine and Conversation: And so bold and upright were they in their holy Profession of Christ and his pure Gospel, that they valued not their Lives, in any Comparison with him and his Cause; but, like the Apostle *Paul*, (Acts xx. 24) they rather chose to expose themselves to Death, than deny, renounce, or disown him and his Truths.

12 *Therefore rejoice, ye Heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Wo to the Inhabiters of the Earth, and of the Sea: For the Devil is come down unto you, having great Wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short Time.*

12. Therefore, as on Occasion of the Lord's redeeming and comforting his People, and having Mercy on his Afflicted, the Heavens and the Earth were called upon to sing and be joyful; (*Isa.* xliv. 23, and xlix. 13) so let Heaven above, and all the Saints and Angels that dwell therein, and the whole Church on Earth rejoice and triumph with them, (οἱ ἐν αὐτοῖς) on account of this happy Change in the Face of its Affairs: But, at the same Time, its visible Members that dwell on the Earth, which consists of Land and Water, and on the Continent and the Islands of the Sea, and especially such of them as are carnal and earthly minded under a Profession of the true Faith, may well tremble on account of the Calamities they will yet be exposed to*: For the Devil,

* The Paraphrase has given several Senses of *the Inhabiters of the Earth and of the Sea*: But, perhaps, what relates to the *Continent* and the *Islands*, and chiefly to the *earthly minded* Members of the visible Church, that would be most in Danger of falling off by the Devil's Efforts, may best suit the Intention of this Part of the Prophecy, as pointing to *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, and the Nations on the *Continent*, which threw off Popery at *the Reformation*: For the *Wo to the Inhabiters of the Earth and of the Sea* seems, from what follows in the next Verses, to refer to the *Woman* or Church of Christ; and

Devil, whose Power is not totally destroy'd, though much weakened, is come down to distress and pervert you, as much as possible, with the utmost Fury and Rage; because he finds that his Strength is on the declining Hand; and that, as he has begun to fall, the Time of his doing Mischief to the Church and Cause of Christ shall e'er long be brought to its Period.

13 *And when the Dragon saw that he was cast unto the Earth, he persecuted the Woman which brought forth the Man*-Child.

13. Accordingly, when the Devil, as exerting his Power under the Character of the Dragon, that appeared with seven Heads and Crowns upon them, and ten Horns, (*v.* 3) found himself so greatly baffled by *the Protestant-Reformation*, like one cast down from Heaven to Earth; (*ver.* 9) and saw that, in spite of all his Endeavours to the contrary, pure Christianity had gained so considerable an Ascendency in various Countries, he turned all his Malice and Power, and raised up a new Set of Instruments †, against the true Church, which had been the Mother of so fair and numerous an Offspring, and had propagated, as by a Man-Child, the Cause of Christ in a Succession of Converts from Age to Age, and more especially at the Time of *the Reformation*.

14 *And to the Woman were given two Wings of a great Eagle, that she might fly into the Wilderness, into her Place: Where she is nourished for a Time, and Times, and half a Time, from the Face of the Serpent.*

14. And, notwithstanding all these fierce Attempts against her, God still took Care of her Preservation; and as he was said to *bear* Israel *on Eagles Wings*, when he brought them out of the Land of *Egypt*; (Exod. xix. 4) so the wonderful Strength, Speed and Safety, with which he would appear for the Church at this Season, may be represented by his giving her a Pair of Eagles Wings, that she might flee away from the Rage of her Enemies, though attended with many Difficulties, to her Place of Retirement, which he had provided, during her Wilderness-State, (which was not yet come to its full Period) for her escaping the Fury and Subtilty of that old Serpent the Devil, and his Agents; and for her being refreshed and comforted by his Word and Spirit, and the Ministrations of his two Witnesses, (*Chap.* xi. 3. See the Note there) to the End of all

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and the *Devil's knowing that he had but a short Time* is much more fairly applicable to the Time of *the Reformation*, than of the Downfal of *Paganism* in the Empire, which has been already about 1400 Years ago; and therefore it could scarcely be said then, that the Devil knew he had but *a short Time*.

† The *Jesuits*, the most subtle and active of all the popish Emissaries, were established, as a Society, by *Ignatius Loyola* in the Year 1534, soon after *the Reformation*, which was begun by *Luther* in the Year 1517, and was carried into an open *Protest* against the severe popish Decrees, at *Spire* in *Germany*, by several Princes of the Empire in the Year 1529, which was the Original of the Name *Protestants*, by which *the reformed Churches* are called to this Day: And how indefatigable numerous Swarms of *Jesuits* have been in their Endeavours to overthrow *the Reformation*; and what Cruelties the Duke of *Alva* used in the *Netherlands*, and Queen *Mary* in *England*; and how the Council of *Trent*, the *Parisian* and *Irish* Massacres, and numberless other Efforts of popish Princes have been spirited up to suppress and extirpate *the Protestant-Religion*, is so familiarly known, as are all the rest of the Facts, corresponding to the Interpretation given of this Chapter, with respect to the Time of *the Reformation*, that 'tis quite needless to quote particular Authorities, which may be seen in all the Historians of those Times; and are almost in every one's Hands.

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her Trials and Afflictions, which under various Forms were to last till the Expiration of twelve hundred and sixty Years; and may be expressed, in the Stile of the Prophet *Daniel*, (Chap. vii. 25, and xii. 7) by a *Time* or Year, two *Times* or Years, and *half a Time* or half a Year, which make together twelve hundred and sixty prophetic Days or Years. (See the Note on *Chap.* x. 6.)

15 *And the Serpent cast out of his Mouth Water as a Flood, after the Woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the Flood.*

15. And this malignant Serpent, the Devil. (*ver.* 9) did his utmost to prevent the Church's Escape to any Place of Retreat or Safety, at the Time of *the Reformatio*, by pouring out a Flood of Error and Persecution after her, to sink and drown her before she could reach it; which may fitly be represented by a Torrent of Water poured out of his Mouth, that by the Force of Antichristian-Errors and Enemies, which he raised up against her, he might pervert and ruin her, as by a mighty Flood that bears down all before it; Which might point to the vigorous Attempts of the Jesuits, and others of the Popish Party, to overwhelm *the Reformation* by Craft and Power, before it was well established. (See the Note on *ver.* 13.)

16 *And the Earth helped the Woman, and the Earth opened her Mouth, and swallowed up the Flood which the Dragon cast out of his Mouth.*

16. And yet, as great Floods of Water are swallowed up in Caverns of the Earth, to prevent the dreadful Inundations, which they would otherwise have made; so God in his Providence inclined the Hearts of many to interpose for the Protection and Shelter of his faithful Servants and People, from the Fury of the Devil and his papal Agents, that they might not be swallowed up by these Attempts to destroy them; Which might point to some secular Powers, such as King *Henry* the Eighth, and other Princes, who, under the Influence of temporal Interests, favoured their righteous Cause; and to some warm Contenders for civil and religious Liberty, who, though not themselves sincere Christians, detested Persecution of all Sorts; and so took the Part of *Protestants* to prevent their being over-run by Antichristian-Powers, and their tyrannical Impositions upon Conscience.

17. *And the Dragon was wroth with the Woman, and went to make War with the Remnant of her Seed, which keep the Commandments of God, and have the Testimony of Jesus Christ.*

17. And that old Serpent and Blood-thirsty Dragon, the Devil, inclusive of his Popish Instruments, was so enraged at this unexpected powerful Assistance to the Church of Christ, that he renewed his Attacks with the utmost Violence upon all, he could possibly come at of her spiritual Children, whom by former Methods he could not overcome; and who were a holy Remnant reserved for God by his Grace, and were faithful in having an universal Respect to his Commands, and in maintaining both a doctrinal and practical Witness to the Purity of the Gospel, and of all its Ordinances of Worship, according to Christ's Institutions; Which might point at the last vigorous Efforts of Antichristian-Power, that it should ever make against the re-

formed Church, toward the Close of the twelve Hundred and sixty Years of the Beast's Reign, and of the Witnesses prophesying in Sackcloth *.

Recollections.

How beautiful and glorious is the Church of Christ, as lifted up above this World, and shining in illustrious Rays of the Sun of Righteousness, and of the pure apostolic Doctrine of the Gospel! And how earnest are her Desires, Prayers and Endeavours, that, in her, many Converts may be born to God! And her Labour shall not be in vain; for when Sion travails she brings forth her Children.—But what a bitter Enemy is Satan to the Church's Prosperity and Increase! He watches to devour all her spiritual Seed, as soon as they are born into the Gospel-Kingdom; and he with Fury and Subtilty under all the Antichristian-Forms of a monstrous Dragon, with seven Heads and Crowns and ten Horns; and of an old Serpent and false Accuser of the Brethren, sets himself to oppose, vilify and destroy them. How fain would he and his popish Agents swallow them up, as with a Flood! And how indefatigable are they, from Time to Time, to renew their War against them! But though they may be suffered to drive them into a Wilderness of Solitude and Affliction, they shall find Safety and Refreshment there, as if taken up to the Throne of God for Protection and Comfort, till the Days of their Mourning shall be ended: And how certainly shall Victory fall on their Side, when their Warfare shall be accomplished! Christ and his ministring Servants, whether Angels or Men, will take their Part against the great Dragon and his whole *Posse* of infernal and Antichristian-Instruments; and therefore, in the Issue, he will defeat all their Forces, and throw them down from their tyrannical Dominion.—Though the worst of Woes may fall on carnal Protestants, Christ will ever have a Reserve of a chosen Remnant, that shall keep his Commandments, and maintain the Purity of his Doctrines and Ordinances; and when they are most exposed to persecuting Enemies, the Earth shall help the Woman; and she herself shall obtain the best of Conquests over them, thro' Faith in the Blood of the Lamb, and by the Light and Power of his Word and Spirit, even though it should cost many of her Children their Lives to abide by their Testimony to him. O what Matter of Thanksgiving and Praise is this! How should all the Saints on Earth rejoice and triumph, with the holy Angels and Spirits of just Men made perfect in Heaven, for the Salvation which is brought to the Church in a Display of the Glory of the Kingdom of God and of the Power of his Christ! This Glory has begun to open in the Reformation from Popery. But O when shall the Twelve Hundred and Sixty Years of her Wilderness-State come to its full Period? It wears off apace: And when the Power of Antichrist shall be demolished, He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.

CHAP. XIII.

A Third general Description of the State of the Church, during the same Period of 1260 *Years under Antichrist's Reign, who is represented by the Figure of a wild Beast rising out of the Sea, to whom the Dragon gave his Power,* 1—10. *And another Representation is made of the same by the Figure of a Beast, which had two Horns like a Lamb, and spoke as a Dragon, exercising all the Power of the former Beast,* 11—15. *And obliging all to worship its Image, and receive its Mark, as Persons devoted to it; with an Admonition to consider the Time of the Rise of the Beast, in order to our knowing the Time of its Fall,* 16—18.

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* If this relates, as I think, to the last Push of popish Power, which is still to come against *the Protestant-Cause*, and will issue in the intire Defeat of its Enemies, then the whole Series of Events sufficiently answers the summary prophetic Description, contained in this Chapter, of the State of the Church quite through the 1260 Years of her being in the Wilderness, and of Antichrist's Reign, in full Agreement with the first and third general View that is given of this Period in the preceding and next following Chapters.

TEXT.

TEXT.

1 *AND I stood upon the Sand of the Sea, and saw a Beast rise up out of the Sea, having seven Heads, and ten Horns, and upon his Horns ten Crowns, and upon his Heads the Name of Blasphemy.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. AFTER the two preceding summary Visions, (*Chap.* xi. and xii.) relating to the State of the Church and its Antichristian Enemies, for the Space of twelve Hundred and sixty Years, methought, I stood upon the Sand of the Sea-shore; and there had another Vision, relating to the same Period, in which was represented a savage wild Beast, (θηρίον) as an Emblem, in prophetic Stile, of an *Empire*; and this, being the *Roman*-Empire, signified by the Fourth and last Beast in *Daniel*'s Vision, (*Chap.* vii. 2, 3, 7, 8.) seemed to rise up out of the Sea, as an Emblem of the tumultuous State of the Nations, (*Rev.* xvii. 15.) like the troubled Sea in a Storm, when the barbarous *Goths* and *Vandals* would break in upon the Empire, and it would be divided into *ten Kingdoms*; Intimating that out of those Commotions this Antichristian-Power would rise, which appeared under the Emblem of *seven Heads*, to signify that the Seat of its Dominion would be at *Rome*, which stands upon seven Hills, and that it would be the seventh successive Form of supreme Government; (*Chap.* xvii. 9, 10. See the Note there) and under the Emblem of *Ten Horns*, to signify the ten Kingdoms that would be united under, and subjected to its Power; and ten *Crowns*, one upon each Horn, to signify the regal Authority it would then exercise over all the ten Kingdoms; And upon its seven Heads were wrote the Name of *Blasphemy*, and it was full of such Names, (*Chap.* xvii. 3.) to signify that the Power of the seventh Form of Government would be employed to set up, maintain and propagate Idolatry, in the worshipping of Images, and of Saints and Angels, which is a blasphemous Indignity thrown upon the unalienable Honour of the only living and true God, and is justly stiled *Blasphemy* in the Writings of the Prophets. (*Isa.* lxv. 7, and *Ezek.* xx. 27.)

2 *And the Beast which I saw was like unto a Leopard, and his Feet were as* the Feet *of a Bear, and his Mouth as the Mouth of a Lion: And the Dragon gave him his Power, and his Seat, and great Authority.*

2. And, methought, this Beast had the Appearance of a Leopard, only his Feet resembled those of a Bear; and his Mouth was terribly frightful, like the Mouth of a ravenous Lion; to intimate that all the Cruelty, Subtilty and Power of the three preceding Monarchies, represented in *Daniel*'s Vision, under these Figures (*Chap.* vii. 4—6.) would be united in this *Roman* papal Empire: And the Devil, who in my last Vision, relating to this Period, was represented as exerting his Power, by the Antichristian-Beast under the Form of a great red Dragon of seven Heads and so many Crowns, and ten Horns, (*Chap.* xii. 3. See the Note there) was still more distinctly and fully represented in *this*, as conveying all his tyrannical Power of civil Government to this savage wild Beast, and placing him at *Rome*, *the great City, which reigns over the Kings of the Earth*, (Chap. xvii. 18.) and which had been the Seat of persecuting Monarchs of the Empire in its *Pagan*-State: And he invested him, *whose Coming is after the Working of Satan*, with great Authority

to promote Superſtition and Idolatry, by *all Power, and Signs, and lying Wonders*; (2 Theſ. ii. 9.) and to perſecute the true Church of Chriſt with the utmoſt Severity.

3 And I ſaw one of his Heads, as it were wounded to Death; and his deadly Wound was healed: And all the World wondered after the Beaſt.

3. And I perceived that one of the ſeven Forms of Government, ſignified by the ſeven Heads of the Beaſt, was ſo deſperately wounded, as ſeemed to be paſt all Hope of Recovery; to intimate, that the imperial Power under the *Roman*-Cæſars would be ſubverted; and yet the Wound, to all Appearance mortal, was ſurprizingly healed; Which may be conſidered as referring to the Erection of the imperial Government under the Pope at *Rome*, from whence the ſupreme Authority of the Empire had been intirely removed, during the Exarchate of *Ravenna*, without any human Proſpect of *Rome*'s ever being reſtored to its antient Dignity again: (See the Note on *Chap.* viii. 12.) And upon this before-unexpected and unlikely Revival of the Power of *Rome* under the temporal Dominion of the Pope, all the Nations of the Empire were aſtoniſhed at it; and ran with Veneration and Delight after the Beaſt, as People uſed to do after a ſtrange and grand Sight, full of Wonder at his amazing Riſe and Power, Riches, Honour and Grandeur. (*Chap.* xvii. 8.)

4 And they worſhipped the Dragon which gave Power unto the Beaſt: And they worſhipped the Beaſt, ſaying, Who is like unto the Beaſt? Who is able to make War with him?

4. And the Generality of them paid not only civil, but idolatrous Worſhip, in Effect, and by juſt Conſtruction, to the Devil himſelf, who before had been repreſented, as exerting his tyrannical Power, by Antichriſt, under the Form of *the great red Dragon*, (See the Note on *Chap.* xii. 3.) and had now conſigned it over to him, under the Form of *the Beaſt*, to whom, and to whoſe arbitrary and idolatrous Injunctions and Decrees, they readily ſubmitted and yielded implicite Faith and Obedience; looking upon him as a ſort of Deity, and the univerſal Head of the Empire, as well as of the Church: And they wondering at the uncontroulable Authority and Power, with which he reigned, cried out with pleaſing Admiration and Triumph, What Power on Earth is equal to this of the Pope, ſignified by the Beaſt? What Prince or Potentate is able to reſiſt, or contend with him, or ſtand before him? All muſt and ſhall ſubmit to him, and vail to his Authority over them, which he will aſſume by diſpoſing of Crowns and Kingdoms, and treating Kings and Emperors with Indignity and Contempt at his Pleaſure. †.

5 And there was given unto him a Mouth ſpeaking great Things, and Blaſphemies; and Power was

5. And by the Devil's Influence, and God's Permiſſion, he opened his Mouth, as with great Terror, ſo with high ſwelling Words of Vanity, talking at a haughty and imperious Rate in Promiſes and Threatnings, and in blaſphemous Boaſts of divine Authority, and Claims of religious, as well

† A moſt ſhocking Account of the extravagant Pride, and tyrannical Inſolence of *Popes*, in treating the Perſons, Crowns and Dignities of Emperors and Princes, may be ſeen in Dr. *More*'s Theological Works, p. 490.

given unto him to continue forty and *two Months.*

as civil Homage to be paid to him, who would *exalt and magnify himself above every God.* (Dan. xi. 36.) And he was permitted to exercise his idolatrous and persecuting Power, more or less, through his whole Reign, which was to last for the Space of Forty and two prophetic Months, which amount to twelve Hundred and sixty Years, and make up the same Period of Time, that is allotted to the Church's being in the Wilderness, and the Witnesses prophesying in Sackcloth. (See the Note on *Chap.* x. 6.)

6 *And he opened his Mouth in Blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his Name, and his Tabernacle, and them that dwell in Heaven.*

6. Yea, he was represented as *speaking marvellous Things against the God of Gods,* (Dan. xi. 36.) and *sitting as God in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God*; (2 Thes. ii. 4.) and arrogantly assuming the Prerogatives of God in pretending to forgive Sins, and usurping Authority over Mens Consciences, and establishing such idolatrous Laws and Canons, as are a Dishonour and Reproach to his sacred Name: And, methought, he went on with his blasphemous Reproaches of *the Church* of God, * (in which he after a special and gracious Manner dwells, as he did in his Tabernacle and Temple of old) stigmatizing them as Heretics and Apostates; and robbing them of their Glory, by setting up for an universal Headship over them; which belongs to Christ only: He likewise disgraced the Names and Characters of departed Saints and the Angels in Heaven, by fabulous Legends about them, and turning them to an idolatrous Use in paying the religious Worship to them, which they detest; (*Chap.* xix. 10, and xxii. 9.) and in anathematizing the faithful Servants of Christ, that are Citizens of the heavenly *Jerusalem*, and his holy Martyrs that have their Mansions in Heaven.

7 *And it was given unto him to make War with the Saints, and to overcome them: And Power was given him over all Kindreds, and Tongues, and Nations.*

7. And he was permitted by divine Providence, and spirited up by Satan, to set himself against the Professors of Christ, who were visible Saints, by violent Persecutions, and Wars upon those, that should refuse to submit to his Authority: By which Means he was suffered to pervert some, and deprive others of their Estates, Liberty and Lives; and to exercise his tyrannical Power over all Nations of various Lineages and Languages through the vast Extent of his Empire.

8 *And all that dwell upon the Earth shall worship him, whose Names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain*

8. And his Power and Authority, in the whole of his Dominion, was represented to be so prevalent, that all the Inhabitants of the Empire would be brought into either a forced, or willing Obedience to his cruel and idolatrous Decrees; except those, whom God of his own mere Grace has chosen, as his peculiar People, and knows as particu-

* By *his Tabernacle* some understand the Temple of Christ's Body, in which he, the eternal *Word, who is God, dwelt,* or *Tabernacle* on Earth: (*John* i. 1, 14.) And this may be said to be blasphemed in the Sacrifice of *the Mass* by a pretended *Transubstantiation*, and offering it up again and again, as though by one Offering he had not perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

from the Foundation of the World.

larly and distinctly by Name, as if they were written down, in a literal Sense, in the Lamb's Book of Life; in which all are, as it were, registered, who were given him of the Father, to be redeemed and brought safe to Glory, in Virtue of his Sacrifice, which may be said to have been slain, not only in the Purpose of God from Eternity, (See 1 *Pet.* i. 19, 20.) but in the first Promise, and in its typical Representations and Prophecies, and saving Efficacy, from the Beginning of the World, ever since the Fall of Man.

9 *If any Man have an Ear, let him hear.*

9. If any one is desirous to understand the Meaning and Importance of these Prophecies, relating to this new Antichristian-Power, Let him seriously attend to what has been said about it, for his Caution against holding any Communion with it; and to what is going to be immediately added, for his Encouragement, Support and Comfort, which is this:

10 *He that leadeth into Captivity, shall go into Captivity: He that killeth with the Sword, must be killed with the Sword. Here is the Patience and the Faith of the Saints.*

10. The great Antichrist, who, during this Period, takes so many Captive at his Will, and tyrannizes over their Consciences, shall not always prevail against the Church of Christ; but shall at length be himself taken Captive and reduced to an abject State, and they shall triumph over him: He who has been the Cause of eternal Death to some, by means of his pernicious Errors, and the Cause of temporal Death to others by Martyrdoms and Wars, must himself, at the Expiration of his Term, be utterly destroyed, Soul and Body, by the Sword of Men and the Sword of the Spirit for ever; What Measure he metes to them, God will measure to him again. (*Matth.* vii. 2.) It requires a great deal of Faith to believe this, and of Patience to wait for it; and as the People of God, during the Reign of the Beast, will have great Occasion for the Exercise of both these Graces; so here is a Consideration well suited to support their Patience at the worst of Times in Hope of Deliverance; and to strengthen and animate their Faith to persevere and bear up with Christian-Fortitude under all Tribulations, as believing that what is foretold of the Downfal of Antichrist shall surely be accomplished, in God's appointed Time, to his Glory, and their Triumph over all his and their Enemies.

11 *And I beheld another Beast coming up out of the Earth; and he had two Horns like a Lamb, and he spake as a Dragon.*

11. After this, was presented to my View another Form of a Beast, which, though for Substance the same with that but now described, (*ver.* 1. *&c.*) may on Account of its Shape, and in different Considerations of it, be called another Beast, † which rose up from the Earth beneath, as issuing out of a worldly Temper, and of the bottomless Pit:

† The Obscurities and Difficulties that lie upon all Conjectures I have met with about the Meaning of this *second Beast*, most of which may be seen in Mr. *Lowman*'s Note upon it, are so great and many, that it would answer no good End for the Reader to be puzzled with them. as I myself have been; nor can I be fully satisfied with that, which I am most inclined to, though with *some* Singularity, *viz.* that this *second Beast*, which exercises the *same Power*, and has the *same Mark*, and *Name*, and *Number* with the first, is another Representation of the *same papal* Empire set in a different Point of Light, chiefly (I don't say

Pit: (*Chap.* xi. 7.) And he appeared with two Horns, resembling those of a Lamb, a Symbol of his spiritual, as well as temporal Dominion, who seemed to put on a specious Air of Meekness and Gentleness, Humility and Purity, like a Lamb; but, in Reality, his Anathemas and cruel Injunctions, enforced by the civil Arm, were as terrible, as the Rage of a Dragon.

12 *And he exerciseth all the Power of the first Beast before him, and causeth the Earth, and them which dwell therein, to worship the first Beast, whose deadly Wound was healed.*

12. And under Pretence of being the universal Head of the Church, he, as shewn to me in Vision, assumes and makes use of all the Power and Authority, (ἐξουσίαν) that had been before represented as exercised by the Beast, which appeared in a former Vision under the Figure of a Monster of seven Heads and ten Horns, with a Crown on each of them: (*ver.* 1.) And by violent Methods of Excommunications, and Persecutions, through the Assistance of secular Powers, he forces the carnally-minded Inhabitants of that Part of the Earth, which is under his Dominion, to pay all the religious Homage, Obedience and Submission to him under this new Form of his appearing, as had been given to the monstrous Beast, that was represented under another Figure in the foregoing Vision, (*ver.* 3.) as recovering soveteign Empire at *Rome*, after it seemed to have been mortally wounded past Recovery.

13 *And he doeth great Wonders, so that he maketh Fire come down from Heaven on the Earth, in the Sight of Men.*

13. And, the more effectually to compass his tyrannical and idolatrous Design, he pretends to miraculous Powers; insomuch that, as *Elijah*, to vindicate the Character of the Jehovah of *Israel*, as the only true God, obtained by Prayer, that Fire should come down from Heaven, at one Time to consume the Burnt-Sacrifice, and at another to consume the Captains and their Fifties, which were sent by King *Ahaziah* to apprehend him; (1 *King.* xviii. 37, 38, and 2 *King.* i. 10, 12.) So this two horned Beast seems to do like Miracles, and *that* publickly in the View of many Spectators, to confirm his false Doctrines and usurped Authority; Which may be considered as pointing at the *lying Wonders*, (2 *Thes.* ii. 9.) and numerous sham-Miracles of the Romish Church, which are boasted of and recorded in their Legends; and at their dreadful Thunderbolts by public Anathemas, in which they curse the Excommunicated with Bell, Book

say wholly) in its *ecclesiastical*, as the former was chiefly in its *temporal* Power. And it is no uncommon Thing for the same State to be set out in Scripture by different Emblems; as the *Persian*-Empire is by a *Bear* and *Ram*, (Dan. vii. 5, and viii. 3.) and the *Grecian* by a *Leopard* and a *He-Goat*; (Dan. vii. 6, and viii. 5.) and our Lord himself is represented, in this Book of Prophecy, sometimes as a *Lion* and at others as a *Lamb*, and under various other Characters. But, whether I am right in my Thoughts of the *second Beast*, or not, it is no great Doubt with me, but that it relates to some Form or other of the popish Power, during the Term of 42 prophetic Months or 1260 Years, which are pointed out in the summary View, that is given in this and the two preceding Chapters, as the Time of the Beast's Reign, and of the Woman's being in the Wilderness. (See the Note on *Chap.* x. 6.) And this is all that I think of Moment in the present Case, whichever Way the Vision of the Beast as appearing like a *Lamb with two Horns*, &c. be interpreted. But *the Number of the Beast*, ver. 18, at the Close of the Description of this *second Beast*, manifestly relates to the *Date* of Antichrist's Power, which is signified by the *first Beast*. This seems to be a strong Objection to all such Interpretations, as make the *second Beast* to be emblematical of any different Person or Power, that rose at any considerable Distance of Years after *the first*.

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and Candle, as though they would bring Fire down from Heaven upon them; and which are executed, by delivering them over to the secular Power to put them to Death by *Burning*, or other Tortures, which are indeed *fiery Trials*.

14 *And deceiveth them that dwell on the Earth, by the Means of those Miracles which he had Power to do in the sight of the Beast, saying to them that dwell on the Earth, that they should make an Image to the Beast, which had the Wound by a Sword, and did live.*

14. And he imposes upon the Subjects of his Empire that are influenced by earthly Things, deluding them into Superstition and Idolatry, by Means of those feigned Miracles, which he pretended to have Power to work, under the Countenance, Approbation and Encouragement of the secular Arm, the Emblem of which was his *speaking as a Dragon:* (ver. 11.) And he perswaded, enticed, and even commanded these earthly minded People to set him up as an Idol, and pay their Homage to him, as to the Image of the Beast, which was represented in the former Vision to have recovered sovereign Empire at *Rome*, after it was thought to have been wounded unto Death in its *sixth* Head; (*ver.* 3, 12.) Which may be considered as emblematical of their Deifying the Pope, and of all their Image-Worship, and paying blind Obedience to the whole System of Popery, which was set up by his Authority.

15 *And he had Power to give Life unto the Image of the Beast, that the Image of the Beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the Image of the Beast, should be killed.*

15. And he had Means sufficient in his own Hands to establish his Authority, as the living Image of the former Beast, together with the Authority of all his idolatrous Constitutions, and to enforce it with Vigour and Efficacy, that, like the imagined living Oracles of the Heathens, this living Image of the Beast might both speak Blasphemies and Terrors in publishing its arbitrary Decrees and sanguinary Laws, and might execute them by Excommunications, Pains and Penalties, even to Death itself, upon all that should refuse to worship, or to acknowledge, honour and submit to the Injunctions of this Image of the Beast, according to the Representation, that in the present Vision is given of it; Which may be considered, as pointing to the severe Laws and Practices of the Romish Church, in its Proceedings against all that renounce its Authority, and are deemed Heretics.

16 *And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a Mark in their right Hand, or in their Foreheads:*

16. And that the true Sons of the apostate Church might be the more evidently distinguished from others, who would not comply with his Authority, He ordered that Persons of all Ranks and Degrees within the Dominion of the Papacy, high and low, rich and poor, Masters and Servants, should make an open Profession of their acknowledging it; which may be figured out by the Emblem of a visible Mark, impressed on their *right Hand*, to denote their Activity in his Cause, or on their *Foreheads*, to denote their visible Profession of Devotedness to him; in Allusion to the Custom of Masters setting a Mark upon their Slaves, to signify that they were their own Property; * and of Heathen-

* *Martial*, in his *Epigrams* (Lib. 2, Epig. 29, and Lib. 3. Epig. 21.) speaks of *Slaves* being marked on their *Foreheads*; and of one who endeavoured to hide the Mark of his Slavery, by putting

then-Idolators marking themselves with some Figure, in Token of what Deity they were devoted to.

17 *And that no Man might buy or sell, save he that had the Mark, or the Name of the Beast, or the Number of his Name.*

17. And so strict and severe were these Orders, † that no one whatever was allowed the common Privilege of Merchandize or Commerce in buying or selling, much less the pretendedly more valuable Privilege of buying or selling Pardons, Dispensations and Indulgences *&c*; except those that made an open Profession of the popish Religion, and thereby wore the distinguishing Badge of the Beast, and bore his Name, like Children of their own Father, as the *Papists* do of the *Pope*, who in *Latin* is called *Papa*; or that took upon them the Profession of that System of erroneous Doctrines, which he established, and are characteristic of him, as the great Antichrist.

18 *Here is Wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the Number of the Beast. For it is the Number of a Man; and his Number* is *Six Hundred Threescore* and *Six.*

28. It is an Instance of adorable Wisdom in God, for Reasons best known to him, to foretel Events of this Nature in such a covert Manner: And it requires spiritual Wisdom and Application of Thought, with humble Dependence on divine Guidance, to understand the mystical Descriptions of the Antichristian Beast. Whoever is minded, and has any Skill for Enquiries of this sort, Let him carefully employ it in a close and diligent Search into the Number of Years henceforth to come, when this idolatrous Power is to rise in its full Strength, that he may thereby learn, who, or what is meant by this Representation of it; and consequently, at what Time its Period of Twelve Hundred and Sixty Years shall expire. The finding out of this need not be absolutely despaired of: For its Rise in its complete State is to be discovered by computing from the Time of this Vision a Number of Years, which is commonly used by Men in their Way of reckoning; and that Number is * *six Hundred and sixty Six.*

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a Patch or Plaister upon his Forehead to cover it. And Dean *Prideaux* tells us, (*Connect.* Vol. 2. Book 2.) that *Ptolemy Philopater*, to degrade the *Jews* of *Alexandria*, ordered " that all of them that should come to be enrolled, in the third Rank among the common People of *Egypt*, should at the Time of their Enrolment have the Mark of an *Ivy Leaf*, the Badge of his God *Bacchus*, by an hot Iron impressed upon them; and that all those who should refuse to be thus enrolled and stigmatized with the said Mark, should be made Slaves; and that if any of them should stand out against this Decree, he should be put to Death." And the Custom of the Heathen's printing Marks upon their Bodies, signifying the Deity to which they were devoted, is manifestly referred to in *Levit.* xix. 28. (See *Ainsworth* on the Place.) *And Grotius* shews that *Servants* were principally marked on their *Foreheads*, and *Soldiers* on their *Hands*. (Vid. in loc.)

† *Pareus* observes in his Note on this Verse, that Pope *Martin* the Fifth. in his *Bull* annexed to the Council of *Constance*, enjoined by an Oath, that all, who professed themselves to be devoted to the *Roman*-See, should expel all those, that don't hold the Faith and Communion of the Church, as scabby Sheep, which infect the Flock of the Lord; and should not permit them to preach nor to dwell among them, nor to make any Contracts or Bargains, or exercise any Trade among them; nor to enjoy with Christians the Comforts of Humanity. And Mr. *Cradock* refers to the Council of *Lateran*'s anathematizing all, that entertained any of the *Waldenses*, or traded with them; and to a Synod in *France*, which forbad any Commerce with *Heretics* in buying or selling.

* The Obscurity in which the Number 666 is left in Prophecy calls for studious modest Enquiry, and humble Prayer to settle the Meaning of it. The learned Mr. *Potter*, in an elaborate Discourse on this Number, endeavours to adjust it by extracting the *square Root* of 666, which, with a Fraction,

RECOLLECTIONS.

In how many Forms doth the Papal Antichrist appear! Sometimes with the Meekness and Gentleness of a Lamb to deceive, and at others with the Fury and Cruelty of a Dragon to destroy; both uniting to pervert and ruin the Church of Christ. With what Blasphemies doth he open his Mouth! With what lying Wonders doth he impose upon earthly-minded Men! With what uncontrouled Authority doth he command and force his Subjects to submit to idolatrous Image-Worship, and all the Abominations of Popery! And with what dreadful Severity doth he curse all, that will not openly profess absolute and blind Obedience to him, and his Decrees! This is the plain Mark of the Beast; and they that have not this Mark upon them, whether they be of high or low Degree, must, according to his Orders, be deprived of the common Privileges of civil Society and Commerce, and of Life itself. Alas! How many Nations and People are deluded into fatal Errors, to their eternal Perdition, by his Allurements on one Hand, and Terrors on the other! None under his Dominion can be secured against it, but God's Elect that are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, the Virtue of whose Sacrifice has been effectual to Salvation, through Faith in him, ever since the Entrance of Sin, soon after the Creation of the World. But how much soever the *Romish* Potentate may distress these by Wars, Persecutions and Martyrdoms, to the killing of their Bodies, he shall never prevail to pervert and destroy their Souls. And, blessed be God, there is a certain limitted Time, set in Prophecy, for his utter Downfall; when all the Evil he has done to others, shall in righteous Vengeance be retaliated upon him, to the Glory of the Redeemer, and the Happiness of his People. How delightful is the Prospect of this; and what a Support to Faith and Patience under all Antichristian Oppressions! Did we but certainly know when to begin the Computation of the Twelve Hundred and Sixty Years of his Reign from Six Hundred and Sixty Six, we could be at no Loss to say when they shall end. Such Hints are given of this in Prophecy, as became the Wisdom of God; and we may hope to come at some Knowledge of their Meaning by humble Enquiries into them, with a Dependence on divine Light and Guidance. Let those of us therefore, who are desirous of understanding these Things, seriously consider what is said in prophetic Writings about them; and comfort ourselves with assured Hopes, that, in God's prescribed Time, the Church shall get through all her Troubles, and triumph over all her Enemies; and that then what we know not now, we shall know with the clearest Evidence of their exact Accomplishment.

CHAP. XIV.

To comfort the Church under the melancholy Representation, which had been made in the foregoing Visions of the 1260 Years of the Witnesses prophesying in Sackcloth, of the Church's being in the Wilderness, and of the Reign of

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tion of 41, is 25, which multiplied into itself, and adding the Fraction, gives the Number 666, and adding 25 to the Year of our Lord 33, makes 58, and this, added to 666, makes 724: when, as some think, the Beast arrived to its State of Manhood, and the War about worshipping of Images began. Others have thought that this Number might be made out by the *Greek* Word Lateinos (λατεινος) which signifies the *Latin*-Church, the *numeral* Letters of which make just 666, thus,

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30. 1. 300. 5. 10. 50. 70. 200, which added together amount to that Number. But as these, however ingenious, are very uncertain Conjectures, I have rather chose to fall in with such Writers, as seem more probably to compute the Number 666 from the Time, when the Apostle *John* received and wrote this Vision, which is most commonly thought to be about the Year of our Lord 94; and adding 666 to 94 makes 760, which reaches but about 4 or 5 Years beyond the Rise of the Beast, as supposed to be about the Year 755, or 756, when the Pope became a temporal Prince, and received the Investiture of *Peter's* Patrimony from *Pepin* King of *France*, and might possibly be about 4 or 5 Years in taking actual and complete Possession of it. (See Mr. *Lowman's* Note.) According to this Account, Antichrist's Reign is to expire about the Year of our Lord 2015, or 2016, as may appear by adding 1260 to 755 or 756.

Antichrist, a Chorus of the heavenly Church is introduced in another Vision, as celebrating the Praises of God, in the Presence of the Lamb, for their Happiness, who, as a Virgin-Company, had continued faithful to Christ and his Cause under that Period, 1—5. *Then follows a Vision of three Angels; one proclaiming, in a Way of Prediction, the everlasting Gospel, which should be preached at the Reformation; another, the Downfal of* Babylon, *the same with the Antichristian-Beast; and a third, the dreadful Wrath of God which should be poured out upon the Worshippers of the Beast, together with the Blessedness of them that die in the Lord,* 6—13. *To this is added a Vision of Christ himself with a sharp Sickle in his Hand, and of an Angel crying to him to execute Judgment on his Enemies, as ripe for Destruction, under the Emblem of a Harvest ripe for cutting down, which he accordingly did,* 14—16. *And a Vision of two Angels more; one of which had also a sharp Sickle; and the other cried to him to proceed to further Executions of Judgments, without Delay, upon the Antichristian-Party, that had filled up the Measure of their Iniquities, which was done with dreadful Vengeance, under the Emblem of a Vintage fully ripe, and trodden in the Wine-Press of God's Wrath,* 17—20.

TEXT.

1 AND *I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty* and *four thousand, having his Father's Name written in their Foreheads.*

2 *And I heard a Voice from Heaven, as the Voice of many Waters, and as the Voice of a great Thunder: And I heard the*

PARAPHRASE.

1. AT the Close of the preceding Visions, (*Chaps.* 11, 12, 13,) which opened the most grievous Scenes before me, relating to the State of the Church's Afflictions, and Antichrist's Reign, for twelve hundred and sixty Years, I was immediately favoured with another, of a most delightful and encouraging Nature, for the Relief and Comfort of the Church under all the Tribulations of the foregoing Period. I look'd with earnest Desire to see what should next be revealed; and, behold! with Admiration and Joy, I again had a Vision of the true Lamb of God, who had been slain, (*Chap.* v. 6.) as standing with Victory and Triumph on *Mount Sion, the City of the living God,* where *Jesus the Mediator* is: (*Heb.* xii. 22, 24.) And with him I saw the hundred and forty four Thousand, which had before been symbolically represented to me as his seal'd ones, (*Chap.* vii. 4.) to intimate that during the whole Reign of Antichrist none of them were lost: All which appeared with the Mark of God his Father's Name visibly written on their Foreheads, to denote that they were his peculiar People, who had made an open and honourable Profession of Christ and his Gospel in the worst of Times, and were intirely devoted to him, as his faithful Servants, in Opposition to all those that had the Mark of the Beast. (See the Note on *Chap.* xiii. 16.)

2. And, methought, I heard a melodious Voice of Joy and Praise from among this triumphing Assembly in Heaven; the Voice of a vast Multitude, as signified by *many Waters,* (*Chap.* xvii. 1, 15.) and a Voice as loud as a great Clap of Thunder: And it was exceeding harmonious in mine Ears, like the Music of Temple-Worship on solemn Festi-

Voice of Harpers harping with their Harps:

Festivals; where Harpers play'd upon their Harps, and others joined with their Musical Instruments, in charming Concert with the Voices. (1 *Chron.* xxv. 1—7, and *Ps.* lxviii. 25.)

3 *And they sung as it were a new Song before the Throne, and before the four Beasts, and the Elders: And no Man could learn that Song, but the hundred* and *forty* and *four thousand, which were redeemed from the Earth.*

3. And this glorious Company united, as with one Heart and Voice, in singing a lofty Hymn of *Blessing, Honour, Glory and Power to him that sits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever*; (Chap. v. 13.) A Psalm or Song of Praise, of a most excellent Nature, and new Strain, for redeeming Love, as suited to all the Light, Grace and Purity of the Gospel-Revelation. They were employ'd in this solemn Act of Worship in the Presence of God, bowing with the most humble and adoring Prostration before him, as sitting on the Throne; (*Chap.* iv. 10.) and in the Presence of the four living Creatures, the Representatives of Gospel-Ministers; and of the four and twenty Elders, the Representatives of the Church. (See the Notes on *Chap.* iv. 4, 6.) And so spiritual and sublime was this Song, that none could fully understand it, or taste its Sweetness, and join heartily in it, but those, that are symbolically represented by the hundred and forty four Thousand, who were redeemed by the Blood of Christ, (*Chap.* v. 9.) and, in Consequence thereof, by his Power and Grace, from among the rest of Mankind upon Earth, and particularly of the Antichristian-Part of them.

4 *These are they which were not defiled with Women: For they are Virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among Men,* being *the First-fruits unto* God, *and to the Lamb.*

4. These are the holy and happy Souls, who, in the Days of Antichrist's Reign, did not defile themselves with the Idolatry of the *Romish* Church, that *great Whore of* Babylon, *and Mother of Harlots, with whom* many *committed Fornication* or spiritual Whoredom, (*Chap.* xvii. 1, 2, 5.) as Idolatry is often stiled by the Prophets: (See *Ezek.* xvi.) For they are like pure and chaste Virgins, espoused to Christ, their one and only Husband, (2 *Cor.* xi. 2.) and, as such, would never go into spiritual Adultery in worshipping Images, Saints, or Angels; or applying to any Mediator but Christ. These are of those that keep close to the Lamb of God, in their Dependence alone on the Merit and Virtue of his Sacrifice, for Pardon and all Salvation, and in their faithful Adherence to all his Doctrines, Ordinances, and moral Commandments; following his Guidance and Example in every Duty, Trial and Affliction, in which he went before them, and called them to come after him, as Sheep after their great Shepherd, till he should bring them safe to Glory. These were redeem'd to God, by his precious Blood, from among *every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation* of Mankind, (See the Note on *Chap.* v. 9.) and were delivered by his Grace from all the Antichristian-Party, and their Sins and Errors; they being a holy People, consecrated to God the Father, and to the Lamb who was slain; and being a Pledge of many more, that should be

be so; even as *the first Fruits* were holy and consecrated to the Lord, and were an Earnest of the following Harvest.

5 *And in their Mouth was found no Guile: For they are without Fault before the Throne of God.*

5. And there was no designing Hypocrisy or prevailing Deceit in them; but they were faithful and upright, in their Profession of Christ and Testimony against all Idolatry, and Corruptions in Doctrine and Worship, and in all that they said; For in their governing Behaviour, and Conscience toward God, they are *without Blame before him in Love*, (Eph. i. 4.) and are accepted as completely righteous in his Sight, who imputes not Iniquity to them, but the Righteousness of Christ, (*Rom.* iv. 6—8, compared with *Psa.* xxxii. 1, 2.) in which he looks upon them, and they appear without any Charge of Guilt before his Throne.

6 *And I saw another Angel fly in the Midst of Heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the Earth, and to every Nation, and Kindred, and Tongue, and People,*

6. And as a further Encouragement to Faith, Hope and Patience, I beheld an Angel flying through the Air, as one did before, (*Chap.* viii. 13.) but now with a different, and more comfortable Message; and *that* was to notify the preaching of glad Tidings of great Joy, as contained in the Gospel of the ever-blessed God, which, for Substance, is unchangeably the same, ever since the Publication of it in the first Promise, (*Gen.* iii. 15.) and never shall be abolished, as the ceremonial Law was, but shall issue in eternal Life. The Angel proclaimed, that this Gospel should be preached to the Inhabitants of the Earth, even to all Sorts of People among them, of what Nation, Lineage or Language soever; Which may be considered as a Prediction of God's raising up faithful Ministers at the *Protestant-Reformation*, who should preach the pure uncorrupted Gospel of Christ, and give solemn Warnings against all Corruptions of his Word and Ordinances, according to what this Angel spoke, as Representative of them;

7 *Saying with a loud Voice, Fear God, and give Glory to him; for the Hour of his Judgment is come: And worship him that made Heaven and Earth, and the Sea and the Fountains of Waters.*

7. Saying to all People, with great Earnestness, Zeal and Fervour, as with a strong Voice, which might be heard far and wide, and demanded Attention, See to it that ye worship and serve God in Spirit and Truth according to his Word, as the only Rule of Faith and Obedience, in Opposition to human Inventions and Traditions, with holy Reverence of him and Fear of offending him by Idolatry, or any other Iniquity; and that ye glorify him, by humble Adorations of his divine Being and Perfections, and his holy Providence; and by ascribing all Salvation to his free and sovereign Grace, through the only Mediator, in Opposition to the Merit of good Works, and the Mediation of Saints and Angels: For the Time is now come, in which he will begin to execute Judgments upon his Antichristian-Enemies. And let all your Worship be offered up to the great God, through Jesus Christ, and, in Opposition to all Creatures, to him only, (*Chap.* xix. 10, and xxii. 9.) who is the Creator of Heaven and Earth, and the Sea, and Springs of Water, and of all Things contained therein.

8 *And there followed another Angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great City, because she made all Nations drink of the Wine of the Wrath of her Fornication.*

8. And, after this, there followed another Angel with most joyful Tidings to the Church, giving them Notice that, in God's due Time, their great Antichristian-Enemy should be utterly destroy'd, an Earnest of which was given in the *Protestant-Reformation*, saying, in the very Terms that had been used concerning the *Caldean-Babylon*, (Isa. xxi. 9) and in prophetic Stile, which speaks of Things to come, as though they were already past; and doubling the Expression to give the strongest Assurance of its certain Accomplishment, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen*; Thereby intimating that, as the antient *Babylon* did actually fall, according to the Prophecy; so Antichristian-*Rome*, that great City, which may be called mystical *Babylon* for its Haughtiness, Persecutions and Idolatries, should as certainly be destroy'd in its appointed Time; because, as Men use to be overcome by strong Wine, and lewd Women are said to entice their Lovers to Fornication by giving them Philters or Love-Potions; so by the Allurements of Riches, Honour and Pleasure, and the Deceits of lying Wonders, she had intoxicated all Nations under her Dominion, and prevailed upon them to have Fellowship with her in idolatrous Worship, which is frequently represented by the Prophets, as spiritual Whoredom, that incenses the Wrath of God against the Practisers of it.

9 *And the third Angel followed them, saying with a loud Voice, If any Man worship the Beast and his Image, and receive* his *Mark in his Forehead, or in his Hand,*

9. And a third Angel succeeded the two last, with Tidings as terrible to the Antichristian-Party, as the two former were comfortable to the faithful Servants of the Lord: But he gave them fair Warning before-hand, saying with a thundering Voice, enough to strike Terror into all that heard it, If any one in these Days of Light, and after these plain Notices, will still obstinately persist in paying religious Homage to the Antichristian-Beast, which has been described under various Forms, (*Chap.* xiii.) and in submitting to his Authority, and complying with Image-Worship, or other Parts of Popish Superstition and Idolatry; and shall make an open Profession of all this, like bearing its distinguishing Mark on his Forehead; or shall be active in serving its Interest, like setting his Hand to it, (See the Note on *Chap.* xiii. 16) He will do it at his utmost Peril.

10 *The same shall drink of the Wine of the Wrath of God, which is poured out without Mixture, into the Cup of his Indignation; and he shall be tormented with Fire and Brimstone, in the Presence of the holy Angels, and in the Presence of the Lamb.*

10. Be he who, or what he will, he shall feel the Weight of divine Vengeance: As he drank of the intoxicating Wine of the great Whore's Fornication, in practising Idolatry with her, (*ver.* 8) he shall drink of the Wine of God's just Fury, (*Jer.* xxv. 15, 16) which, like the strongest deadly Composition, is prepared without Mixture of Mercy, and is poured out with dreadful Abhorrence of such an One, as into a Cup filled with his provoked Wrath; and he shall be punished with agonizing Pain, as with the Torment of burning Fire and Brimstone, in the Sight of the holy Angels, as Witnesses and Executioners of it; (*Matth.* xiii. 49, 50) and before the Face of the Lamb of God, as Judge of all, who will

will paſs a righteous Sentence upon ſuch an One, and will behold his deſerved Miſery, without relenting, or affording any Help or Pity.

11 *And the Smoke of their Torment aſcendeth up for ever and ever: And they have no Reſt Day nor Night, who worſhip the Beaſt and his Image, and whoſoever receiveth the Mark of his Name.*

11. And ſo horrible was the Repreſentation of the Puniſhment of ſuch Offenders, that, methought, I ſaw the Smoke of the Fire, which tormented them, aſcending up inceſſantly with diſmal Darkneſs, as from a Fire which ſhall not be quenched to all Eternity: (*Mark* ix. 43, 44.) And they, like miſerable Wretches that are in the bittereſt Anguiſh Day and Night, have no Intermiſſion, Eaſe, or Reſpite of their Torment, who yield themſelves up to the Authority of the Antichriſtian-Beaſt under any Form of its Appearing; and this ſhall be the deplorable Condition of every one who openly profeſſes Obedience and Devotedneſs to it, as though its Name were printed on his Forehead. (See the Note on *Chap.* xiii. 16.)

12 *Here is the Patience of the Saints: Here* are *they that keep the Commandments of God, and the Faith of Jeſus.*

12. In this View of Things, we ſee the Trials that the Patience of the Saints will be put to, and the Honour, with which it will appear and be crowned at laſt, in the Accompliſhment of what they patiently waited for: Here we ſee who they are, that, notwithſtanding all Oppreſſions by antichriſtian-Enemies, keep cloſe to the Word of God, as the only Rule of their Faith, Worſhip and Obedience, and faithfully conform to it in Heart and Life; and that maintain the Purity of the Doctrines and Inſtitutions of the Lord Jeſus, as what they ſincerely believe, profeſs and practiſe upon his ſole Authority, in Oppoſition to all the Corruptions, Traditions and Impoſitions of Men.

13 *And I heard a Voice from Heaven, ſaying unto me, Write, Bleſſed* are *the Dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, ſaith the Spirit, that they may reſt from their Labours; and their Works do follow them.*

13. And for their further Support and Comfort under all Tribulations, I heard a Voice from Heaven, like that which came from the excellent Glory, relating to our bleſſed Lord, (2 *Pet.* i. 17.) ſaying to me, Write in your Narrative of theſe prophetic Viſions, that they who die in the Faith of Chriſt, united to him as Members of his myſtical Body, and ſhall be found in him ‖, (*Phil.* iii. 9.) as well as they who ſuffer Martyrdom for Chriſt, are and ſhall be unſpeakably happy from the Time of their Death to all Eternity: Yea, the Spirit of Prophecy, whoſe Teſtimony is infallibly true, poſitively aſſures them, from this Time forward, of the Certainty and Excellence of this Bleſſedneſs, which is ſo great, that, at the End of their Trials on Earth, they ſhall reſt with ſweet Refreſhment from all their Labours and Sufferings for Chriſt, from all their ſpiritual Conflicts with Sin, Satan, and the World, and from all

‖ I rather think that *the Dead who die in the Lord* relates to *all true Believers*, that have a ſaving Intereſt in Chriſt, than merely to *Martyrs* for his Sake: For this beſt agrees with the Meaning of like Phraſes in 1 *Cor.* xv. 18. and 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 14, 16; and a Declaration of the Bleſſedneſs of all ſuch is more extenſively uſeful and encouraging to the whole Church, under her various Troubles in the preſent State of Sin and Sorrow. And tho' the Particle (ἀπάρτι) rendered *from henceforth* is differently referred by Critics to either what goes before, or to what follows after it, there may be no great Difference in the Senſe as given in the Paraphraſe.

Sorrows,

Sorrows of every Kind: And none of their Works of Faith, Love and Patience, shall be lost, or forgotten; but they shall all follow them to bear Witness to them, as true Believers who die in the Lord, that they may receive the blessed Fruit of them in a proportionate Reward of Grace, at the great Day of Account; (See *Rom.* viii. 17. and 2 *Cor.* iv. 17.) tho' they don't go before them, in a Way of Plea or Merit, to entitle them to eternal Life.

14 *And I looked, and behold, a white Cloud, and upon the Cloud* one *sat, like unto the Son of Man, having on his Head a golden Crown, and in his Hand a sharp Sickle.*

14. After this, I looked again for some further Revelation; and, observe the following Vision, I saw an illustrious bright Cloud; and upon this Cloud the Lord Jesus, the Messiah himself, who was truly Man, and often stiled *the Son of Man*, appeared, in like manner as he did in *Daniel*'s Vision; (Chap. vii. 13.) he also appeared with Rays of Glory upon his Head, which may be called a Crown of Gold to signify his Royal Dominion, as Lord of All; (*Dan.* vii. 14.) and with the Figure of a sharp Sickle in his Hand, such as Husbandmen use in reaping Corn; an Emblem of his coming forth in Righteousness to cut down his Antichristian-Enemies †.

15 *And another Angel came out of the Temple, crying with a loud Voice to him that sat on the Cloud, Thrust in thy Sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the Harvest of the Earth is ripe.*

15. I also beheld another Angel coming forth from the Church triumphant in Heaven, which is eminently the Temple of God where he most gloriously dwells; and this Angel, as delivering the Order which he brought from God in the heavenly Temple, earnestly called upon the Lord Jesus, who sat on the bright Cloud, saying, Execute righteous Vengeance on evil Doers, without Delay, which was emblematically expressed by immediately thrusting his Sickle among them and reaping them down: For it is high Time, according to their Provocations and to divine Appointment, that thou shouldst cut them off; for the wicked Inhabitants of the Earth are become as ripe for Destruction, as the Corn is to be cut down at the Harvest, like what was said of antient *Babylon.* (Jer. li. 33.)

16 *And he that sat on the Cloud thrust in his Sickle on the*

16. Accordingly, the set-Time for this Stroke upon Antichristian-Powers being come, the Son of Man, who appeared as sitting upon the Cloud, (*ver.* 14.) immediately

† Some are of opinion, that in this Vision, the *Sickle*, *Reaping*, and *Harvest*, are to be taken in *a good Sense*, as they often are in Scripture; and that they here refer to Christ's reaping the Fruits of the Gospel-Ministry, and gathering a great Multitude of Souls into his Kingdom, at the Time of the *Reformation*; or to his gathering the whole Church to himself at the End of the World.—But these Expressions, and those in the next Vision, manifestly allude, at least, to *Joel* iii. 13. where they signify *the Judgments of God for the great Wickedness* of the People; and as the *sharp Sickle* in the Hand of the Angel, that appeared in the next Vision, (*ver.* 17.) was an Emblem of Execution, it seems most proper to interpret the same Emblem in the same Way in both these Visions, whether we refer the *first* to the Stroke upon Antichrist at the *Reformation*, which was a great Distress upon her, and Diminution of her Subjects and Power, or to any other Punishment of her before her Downfall; and refer the *second* to her *utter Destruction* at the Close of her appointed Period, or to the final Judgment of all the Wicked. But as the *Vintage* is *after* Harvest, and is represented (*ver.* 18, &c.) in more terrible Language of Destruction, than the *Harvest*, I am inclined to consider the *Harvest*, as emblematical of the Stroke given to Popery at the *Reformation*; and the *Vintage* of that which shall come with the heaviest Vengeance hereafter, to the *utter Extinction* of that Antichristian-Power. And the general Description here given of this total Overthrow is drawn out more particularly, and at large, in the 18th and 19th Chapters.

Earth; and the Earth was reaped.

began to execute Judgments on that wicked Generation; and Multitudes of them were as effectually cut down as Corn is with a Sickle in Harvest; Which may point at the great Blow he gave to the Beast, when several Nations fell off from, and made Head against Popery at the Time of *the Reformation*, which was a great Loss and Terror to the Antichristian-Party, and the Occasion of bloody Wars, by which many of them were slain; and the Lord did *Judgment upon their graven Images*, as he did upon those of antient *Babylon.* (Jer. li. 47, 52.)

17. *And another Angel came out of the Temple which is in Heaven, he also having a sharp Sickle.*

17. And as Christ has all Instruments at his Command to execute his Wrath; so I afterward saw another Angel come forth from the immediate Presence of God in the heavenly Temple, with the like Emblem of a sharp Sickle in his Hand, to signify that he was to be employed for further Executions of Wrath, in Subordination to, and by the Command and Power of Christ.

18 *And another Angel came out from the Altar, which had Power over Fire; and cried with a loud Cry to him that had the sharp Sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp Sickle, and gather the Clusters of the Vine of the Earth; for her Grapes are fully ripe.*

18. Hereupon, methought, another Angel came forth from the Altar of Burnt-Offering, the Fire of which, to consume the Sacrifices, was an Emblem of divine Justice, which this Angel had Authority (ἐξουσίαν) to denounce; and he, according to his Commission, called aloud with great Earnestness to the Angel, who appeared with the Emblem of a sharp Sickle, in Token of his being armed for Vengeance, (*ver.* 17.) saying, Go on to execute further Judgments in the Slaughter of the Antichristian-Party, the Measure of whose Iniquity is now full, and of whom it may be justly said, as it was of idolatrous *Israel, Their Vine is of the Vine of Sodom; their Grapes are Grapes of Gall, and their Clusters are Bitterness.* Deut. xxxii. 32. Cut them off, as the Clusters of Grapes are cut off from a Vine with a sharp Hook, at the Time of Vintage; for they have fitted themselves for just Destruction, as Grapes are in fit Case to be pressed when they are thoroughly ripe.

19 *And the Angel thrust in his Sickle into the Earth, and gathered the Vine of the Earth, and cast it into the great Wine-press of the Wrath of God.*

19. Immediately upon this, methought, I saw the forementioned Angel (*ver.* 17.) cut down the apostate Church, which may well be stiled the degenerate Vine of the Earth, as with a sharp crooked Knife; and, gathering them together, delivered them up to be punished by the most dreadful Executions of divine Wrath, which would press them with as sore and heavy Calamities, as are figuratively represented, in the Writings of the Prophets, by the treading of Grapes in a Wine-press. (*Isa.* lxiii. 3, 4, and *Lam.* i. 15.) And this appeared, in my Vision, as a very *great* Wine-press, on Account of the vast Multitude that Christ will then *tread down in his Anger and Fury,* (Isa. lxiii. 3, 6.)

20 *And the Wine-press was troden without the City, and Blood came out of the Wine-press, even unto*

20. And the Destruction of the idolatrous persecuting Enemies of Christ, that were without the Pale of his true Church, and shall be excluded from the heavenly City, (*Chap.* xxii. 15.) and cast into *outer Darkness*, was so exceeding great and extensive, as signified by the Treading of a lage Wine-

press

the Horse-Bridles, by the Space of a Thousand and six Hundred Furlongs.

press, which is wont to be done without the City, that in Allusion to the greatest Slaughter in a Field of Battle, and to the Juice of Grapes, which, being squeezed out, is called *the Blood of Grapes*, (Gen. xlix. 11.) their Blood seemed to flow, like prodigious Quantities of Liquor from a huge Wine-press, in such a Torrent, as might be figured out by its rising and swelling as high, as the Bridles of War-Horses, to the Destruction of them and their Riders; and spreading through all the *Pope*'s Patrimony, the Length of which may be computed at sixteen Hundred Furlongs. *

Recollections.

How delightful is a View of Christ as the Lamb on Mount *Sion* among his People, and of their singing with inimitable Strains of Melody, the Praises of redeeming Love! These have distinguishing Marks of the Children of God, that own and honour him, and are owned and honoured by him: These are they that were redeemed from among the rest of Mankind on Earth: They are pure from the superstitious and idolatrous Worship of the Papists; and follow the Lamb wheresoever he goes, and are a kind of First-Fruits consecrated to him and his Father; they are sincere in their Profession of his Name, and are prevailingly holy, and without Blame in Love, and free from Guilt and Condemnation, through Faith in the Righteousness of Christ: In these, Patience shall have its perfect Work; and they will conscientiously obey the Commandments of God, and maintain the uncorrupted Doctrines of Christ, with a humble Trust in him for all Salvation; and these shall be blessed from the Time of their Death, and for ever afterwards, as has been declared by an immediate Voice from Heaven, and by the infallible Spirit of Prophecy. How thankful should we be, that after a long Night of popish Darkness, the everlasting Gospel was preached in its Purity, and with great Success, at the Reformation! What a Blessing is this to the Church of Christ! and what a humbling and vexatious Stroke upon Antichrist, and sure Presage of her utter Downfal! This shall be as certainly accomplished in God's appointed Time, as it is now foretold. And, ah! how dreadful will the Portion of their Cup be, who have drank of the Wine of her Fornication, by joining in her idolatrous Worship! They shall drink of the Cup of God's Wrath, without Mixture; and their Torment shall be incessant for ever and ever. The Lord Jesus, who appeared on a bright Cloud with a glorious Crown, will espouse the Cause of his Church and People, and come forth in Righteousness against their Antichristian-Enemies, by gradual Dispensations of Providence, in which he will cut them down, as with a Sickle in Harvest; till at length he will make a full End of them, as the Grapes of a Vintage are cut off, and cast into and trodden in a Wine-press, till all their Juice is squeezed out. Thus shall it be done in God's Set-Time to the idolatrous and tyrannical Church of *Rome*; and the Slaughter of them will be great and terrible beyond Expression. How should we rejoice in Faith and Hope of the glorious, though awful Manifestation, that will then be made of God's righteous Judgments, to open a Way for the prosperous and happy State of the Church, which shall succeed it.

* Mr. *Joseph Mede* observes, that it is not said that the Angel, which cast the Grapes into the Wine-press trod them; but this was done by Christ himself, who is represented as the King coming forth from Heaven, with a a celestial Army of Horsemen to destroy them: (Vid. *Bibliarid*, in loc.) And says in his *Remains*, (L. 3. Chap. vii. p. 736 of his Works.) "Supposing this *Vintage* to be yet to come, I am much inclined to think, that, this 1600 Furlongs without the City should be a Designation of *Peter*'s Patrimony; or the Demesns of the Church, which in the longest Extent thereof, from the Walls of *Rome* to the River *Po*, is exactly 1600 Furlongs, or 200 *Italian* Miles; whereby it is probable that the Pope's own Territories, *Stato della Chiesa*, may prove the Cockpit of this Execution, whither Christ, as into a Wine-press, will from all Parts gather the bloody Grapes, when he means to tread them." However, as the Execution, here pointed at, seems yet to come, it probably will be at the Close of the Period set out in Prophecy, for the Reign of the Beast: And though we may not be able to determine the exact Time and Circumstances of it, it will as surely be brought to pass in God's appointed Time, as the *Harvest* and *Vintage* return in their appointed Seasons.

CHAP. XV.

A Vision of seven Angels, having the seven last Plagues, follows, by way of solemn Preface to the Execution of them, as to be made upon the Beast; and a Song of Praise is sung by the Church, which obtain'd Victory over him, 1—4. *Then the Temple in Heaven is open'd, from whence the seven Angels come out with the seven Plagues; and to them one of the living Creatures gives seven golden Vials full of the Wrath of God, that they might be ready to pour them out in their Order: Upon which, the Temple was fill'd with an inaccessible Cloud of Glory,* 5—8.

TEXT.	*PARAPHRASE.*
1 AND *I saw another Sign in Heaven, great and marvellous, seven Angels having the seven last Plagues; for in them is filled up the Wrath of God.*	1. AFTER the foregoing Visions, which gave me a general View of the Judgments that should come upon the Antichristian Beast, I had another, which was preparatory to the Execution of the Judgments themselves, that in their Order were to begin, carry on and complete his Ruin. To this Purpose I beheld a very remarkable and amazing Appearance in Heaven of seven Angels, as Ministers of divine Vengeance, who had a Commission to execute the seven last severe Strokes that were to fall upon Antichrist, in their Course, till he should be utterly destroyed: For all the Wrath, which God had righteously determined against this idolatrous and persecuting Power, was contained in these Executions to make a full End of it, together with all the Enemies of Christ and his Church.
2 *And I saw as it were a Sea of Glass, mingled with Fire; and them that had gotten the Victory over the Beast, and over his Image, and over his Mark,* and *over the Number of his Name, stand on the*	2. I furthermore saw, as in a former Vision, (*Chap.* iv. 6.) a Representation of a large Vessel, like the Molten Sea in *Solomon*'s Temple, (1 *Kings* vii. 23.) which shone with a Brightness as white and clear as Crystal, mixt with a beautiful Colour, as red as Fire; † Which may be considered as an Emblem of the spotless Purity and Efficacy of the atoning Blood and Righteousness of Christ, whereby he appeased the fiery Resentments of divine Justice: And, as to the glorious Company which, through Faith in the Blood of the Lamb, had bravely resisted, and by their Doc-

† Among the numerous Conjectures about the Meaning of *the Sea of Glass*, it seems to me that all those are to be discarded, which refer to the State of the Church *on Earth*; the Scene of this Vision being in Heaven, *ver.* 1, as it also had been in the former Vision of *the Sea of Glass*, where *the four living Creatures*, or Representatives of the Ministers of the Church, appeared. (*Chap.* iv. 6. See the Note there) And among the Interpretations, which consider it as *in Heaven*, that given in the Paraphrase, I am ready to think, may be as probable, as any other; since these victorious and triumphing Saints are represented as *standing on the Sea of Glass*; and so may direct our Thoughts to the *Foundation* on which they stand with Joy and Praise, rather than to their own Purity, Love and Zeal, or any other excellent Graces found in them, or exercised by them. And as the folllowing Paraphrase on this Chapter proceeds upon the Supposition, which I think the Spirit of Prophecy determines, that *Heaven* is the Scene of this Vision, it need not be wondered at, that it is different from the Sense of most Expositors, who place the Scene in the Church *on Earth*; or that I take no further Notice of their Explications, while I all along give what seems to me the most probable, that has offered to my Thoughts upon the Plan of this Scene's being *in Heaven*.

Sea of Glass, having the Harps of God.

trine, Example and patient Sufferings even unto Death, had overcome all Temptations to comply with the Authority of Antichrist, and to make an open Profession of his idolatrous Religion, which may be signified by their getting the Victory over the Beast, and his Image and Mark, and the Number of his Name; These appeared as standing with Confidence and Triumph on the Sea of Glass, as the Foundation on which they stand with complete Acceptance in the divine Presence; and they seemed to have Harps in their Hands, in Allusion to those musical Instruments, that were used in the Temple-service for celebrating the Praises of God.

3 *And they sing the Song of Moses the Servant of God, and the Song of the Lamb, saying, Great and Marvellous* are *thy Works, Lord God Almighty; just and true* are *thy Ways, thou King of Saints.*

3. And, methought, they joined in Concert, as a Chorus, to sing the Wonders of divine Providence in a triumphant Song for Deliverance out of the Hands of their persecuting Enemies, like that which was composed by *Moses* the Servant of the Lord, and was sung by *Israel* for their Deliverance from the *Egyptians* at the Red-Sea: (*Exod.* xv. 1, &c.) And to this they added a Song of Thanksgiving and Praise to the Honour of Christ, the Lamb of God, for the much greater Salvation brought in by him; a Song, which he put into their Mouths, saying, in an Ascription of Glory first to God the Father, § Great and wonderful are thy Works of Providence in Ways of Judgment and Mercy, O Lord Jehovah the almighty God, whose uncontroulable Power performs them; and then to the glorified Lamb, saying, Thou art just and righteous in all thy Proceedings against thine Enemies, as rendering to them according to their Deserts; and thou art true in executing thy Threatnings upon them, and faithful in performing thy Promises to thy People, O thou King of the Church, which consists of holy Ones, whom *thou hast redeemed from all Iniquity, and purified to thyself.* (Tit. ii. 14.)

4 *Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy Name? for* thou *only* art *holy: for all Nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy*

4. Who, that knows thy Name, O Lord, will not reverence, worship and put his Trust in thee, and ascribe all Glory to thee, who art infinitely worthy of it? (*Ps.* lxxxix. 7.) For, in Opposition to Antichrist's vainly assuming to himself the Title of *his Holiness*, thou only art fit to wear it, as thou art originally, essentially and communicatively pure and holy. We believe, and rejoice in the Thought,

§ Though Christ in his divine Nature is truly *the Lord God Almighty*, and Characters equivalent to this are elsewhere ascribed to him; (See the Notes on *Chap.* i. 4, 8, and Dr. *Waterland*'s Sermons at the Lady *Moyer*'s Lecture, p. 230, &c.) Yet it appears to me that *God the Father*, or God *essentially* considered inclusive of the three divine Persons, is here most immediately spoken of under this Title; and that Christ in his *Office-Capacity*, is meant by *King of Saints*, to whom Glory is ascribed together with the Father: For the *former* Part of this Song seems to relate to the Song of *Moses*; and the *latter* to the Song of *the Lamb*: And the Title, *King of Saints*, is with the greatest Propriety given to Christ, who in his regal Office is, by Way of Peculiarity, *King of Sion*, and *King of the Church*; and the following Part of this Song is evidently, though not restrictively, applicable to him.

that

Judgements are made manifest.

that the Time is coming, when thou wilt be more abundantly feared and glorified on Earth, than hitherto: For all Nations of the World ſhall come as a willing People unto thee, and own and honour thee, and pay their ſolemn Adorations to thee, as in thy ſpecial Preſence, and under thine Eye, in the Aſſemblies of the Saints; for the Judgments, which thou wilt execute upon thine Antichriſtian-Enemies, are manifeſt Tokens of thy taking the Part of thy People againſt them, to the Conviction of all that duly obſerve the awful Operations of thy Hand.

5 *And after that I looked, and behold, the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Teſtimony in Heaven was opened:*

5. At the Concluſion of this praiſing Song, I had a further Viſion, which led on to the Scene of Judgments that were to be executed in their Order: And as the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle and Temple, and the Ark of the Teſtimony, the Mercy-ſeat, and the Cherubim between which the Lord dwelt, (*Exod.* xxv. 22. and *Pſ.* lxxx. 1.) were ſeen when the High Prieſt entered into the moſt holy Place; So, methought, I ſaw an opening in Heaven, which gave me a View of God's moſt eminently glorious Throne, and of all the Symbols of his Favour to his true Worſhippers, to intimate that, as Enquiries were wont to be anſwered from the Oracle; (2 *Sam.* xvi. 23.) ſo God was now about to anſwer the Prayers of the Church for delivering them from the Power of their Antichriſtian-Enemies.

6 *And the ſeven Angels came out of the Temple, having the ſeven Plagues, clothed in pure and white Linen, and having their Breaſts girded with golden Girdles.*

6. Whereupon, I beheld ſeven Angels, the appointed Miniſters of God's Wrath and Juſtice, coming out of the moſt holy Place, even Heaven itſelf, as having received his Orders with reſpect to the ſeven Judgments, that were to be ſucceſſively executed upon the Beaſt: Theſe Angels, to ſignify the Sanctity of their Character and Miniſtrations, appeared as arrayed in an awful and ſplendid Manner with holy Garments of pure and white Linen, and golden Girdles about their Breaſts, ſuch as the High Prieſts uſed to wear, (*Exod.* xxviii. 4—8, and *Lev.* xvi. 23.) when they went into the Holy of Holies, and came out from thence to bring the Anſwers of God to the Prayers of his People, which they had received from the Oracle.

7 *And one of the four Beaſts gave unto the ſeven Angels, ſeven golden Vials full of the Wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.*

7. And one of the four living Creatures, the Repreſentatives of Goſpel-Miniſters, (See the Note on *Chap.* iv. 6.) who were moſt nearly concerned for the Welfare of the Church, was employed, by divine Commiſſion, to deliver to the ſeven Angels, to each of them one of the ſeven golden Cups or Vials, * which were filled with mortal Ingredients, as Symbols of the Wrath of God, which they

* A *Vial* was a Cup, or wide mouthed Veſſel, to drink out of; and as a *Cup* figuratively ſignifies *Sufferings*, and *Afflictions*, Pſ. xi. 6, and *Matth.* xxvi. 39, and we often read of a *Cup of the Lord's Fury*, and *a Cup of Trembling*; Iſa. li. 17, 22, *Jer.* xxv. 15, and *Zech.* xii. 2; ſo theſe ſeven *Vials* or *Cups* are ſaid to be *full of the Wrath of God*, which was to be poured out upon, and drank by the Antichriſtian-Beaſt, and all the Enemies of the Church. (See alſo *Chap.* xiv. 10.)

were to be Instruments of pouring out upon the idolatrous persecuting Beast, at his Order, and by the Activity of his own Power, who is from everlasting to everlasting God, and lives for ever to execute his righteous Judgments in their Course, till all his Enemies be utterly destroyed.

8 *And the Temple was filled with Smoke from the Glory of God, and from his Power; and no Man was able to enter into the Temple, till the seven Plagues of the seven Angels were fulfilled.*

8. And when they had received their Commission, I saw the heavenly Temple filled with a Cloud of Glory, resembling that which formerly filled the Tabernacle: This Cloud appeared like a thick Smoke awfully glorious, which was a Symbol of divine Vengeance, (*Ps.* xviii. 8) as going forth from the Presence of the Lord, and to be executed by the Glory of his Power, in the Destruction of Antichrist; even as the Cloud on the Tabernacle was of his dreadful Judgment upon *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, and the murmuring *Israelites*: (Numb xvi. 19, 42.) And as *Moses* could not enter into the Tabernacle, nor the Priests stand to minister in the Temple, while the *Glory of the Lord filled the House of the Lord*; (Exod xl. 35, and 1 Kings viii. 11) so no one was able to enter into this heavenly Temple to entreat for the preventing of these grievous Calamities upon the Beast; none were suffered to do this, that Judgment might have its free Course, till all the seven Punishments, to be inflicted by the Ministry of the seven Angels, were fully executed in their Order.

Recollections.

How glorious are the Triumphs of the Saints, who stand in the immediate Presence of God, with all Acceptance on the Foot of the atoning Righteousness of Christ; and who, through Faith in his Blood, have got the Victory over all their Enemies! And how sweetly do they sing of Mercy and of Judgment; of the wondrous Works of Providence and Grace, which are just and true, to the Glory of the Lord God Almighty, and of the Lamb, their sovereign Lord and King! How worthy is he to be reverenced, serv'd and glorify'd! All the Beauties of Holiness, and of every other divine Perfection, shine in him; and the Time is coming when all Nations of the Earth shall worship him, and his Judgments shall be fully manifested in the Destruction of the Antichristian-Beast. The Decree is gone forth against him; the seven Angels have their Commission to pour out their seven Vials, which are fill'd with the Wrath of God, to be executed in due Course upon him; and no Intercessions shall be admitted, to prevent the Progress of these Judgments, till they be fulfilled in the utter Destruction of all popish Powers, and every other Enemy. What a Support and Encouragement to the Church of Christ is the Belief and assured Prospect of this, as given by the Spirit of Prophecy, for their Comfort under all their present Tribulations!

CHAP. XVI.

The seven Angels are ordered to pour out their seven Vials of the Wrath of God on the Antichristian-Beast and all its Supports. 1. The first Vial is poured out on the Earth with grievous Sores, signifying great Troubles thro' the Romish *Community, between the Year* 830 *and* 988, 2. *The second on the Sea, which is turn'd into Blood, signifying a great Effusion of Blood in the holy Wars, between the Year* 1040 *and* 1190, 3. *The third on the Rivers and Fountains,*

Fountains, which became Blood, signifying civil Wars in the Papacy, between the Year 1200 *and* 1371, 4—7. *The fourth on the Sun, which scorched Men, signifying Wars thro' the Contentions of Popes for the papal Chair; and the Destruction of the Eastern Empire, between the Year* 1378 *and* 1530, 8, 9 *The fifth on the Seat of the Beast, signifying the Establishment of the Protestant-Reformation, which was a great Shock to Popery, between the Year* 1530 *and* 1650, 10, 11. *The sixth on the great River* Euphrates, *signifying some terrible Invasion of the Pope's Dominion, from its Eastern Borders, which seems, in Order of Time, to be yet to come,* 12—16. *And the seventh on the Air, the Seat of* Satan's *Power, which shall issue in the total Destruction of all Antichristian Enemies,* 17—21.

TEXT.

1 AND I heard a great Voice out of the Temple, saying to the seven Angels, Go your Ways, and pour out the Vials of the Wrath of God upon the Earth.

PARAPHRASE.

1. THE seven Angels, having received their respective Vials or Cups of the Wrath of God; (*Chap.* xv. 7. See the Note there) and so being ready to pour them out in their Order, whenever he should give the Word of Command; I thereupon heard an exceeding loud, awful and authoritative Voice, proceeding from the heavenly Temple; (*ver.* 17.) whereby, in Allusion to God's antient Way of manifesting his Will from the Oracle, he issued out his Commission, saying to them, Go forth according to my Appointment, and pour out the Cups successively, † that are full of the righteous Wrath of God, upon the wicked Inhabitants, and particularly the Antichristian-Enemies, on the Face of the Earth; a general View of which had been given me in several foregoing Visions.

2 And the first went, and poured out his Vial upon the Earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the Men which had the Mark of the Beast, and upon them which worshipped his Image.

VIAL I.] 2. And, in Obedience to this Command, the *first* Angel went forth, and poured out his Cup of divine Wrath upon *the Earth*; which may signify People of various Countries, and chiefly of the inland Parts of the Antichristian-Territories: And thereupon, methought, the most loathsome and painful Boils and Ulcers, like one of the Plagues of *Egypt*, (Exod. ix. 9—11.) broke out upon, and tormented this spiritual *Egypt* in various Miseries which befel them, even the Subjects of the Papacy, that had complied with the Authority and Corruptions of the Antichristian-Beast, and made an open Profession of the idolatrous Worship that he had set up; (*Chap.* xiii. 15. See the Note there) * Which may be considered, as referring to the general Corruption

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† There is a remarkable Similitude between the four first *Vials* or Cups of God's Wrath, under the seventh Trumpet, which relate to the Judgments that led the Way to, and should issue in the *Ruin of Antichrist*; and the four first *Trumpets*, under the seventh Seal, (*Chap.* viii.) which relate to the Destruction of the *Roman*-Empire, and made way for the *Rise of Antichrist*. They are represented in *both*, as falling upon *the Earth*, *the Sea*, *the Rivers and Fountains of Water*, and *the Sun*, and *that* in the same Order; which may intimate that the Steps of her *Fall* shall be answerable to those of her *Rise*.

* As the First of these Vials, and consequently all that follow, is expresly said to be poured out upon the Men, that had *the Mark of the Beast, and worshipped his Image*, we must, I think, conclude that the Judgments, intended by them, are such as were to be executed upon the Antichristian-Church, during the

ruption of Faith, Worship and Manners, and the sore Distresses, in Body and Mind, of the Professors of this apostate Church, when dreadful Devastation was made upon them, as occasioned by the Contentions and Quarrels, which arose between popish Princes after the Death of *Lewis* surnamed the *Pious*, and continued for a long Time, between the Year *Eight Hundred and Thirty, and Nine Hundred Eighty-eight.*

3 *And the second Angel poured out his Vial upon the Sea; and it became as the Blood of a dead Man: And every living Soul died in the Sea.*

VIAL II.] 3. And the *second* Angel poured out his Cup of divine Wrath upon *the Sea*; which may signify many People of the *Romish* Empire, (*Chap.* xvii. 15.) that dwelt upon the Borders, or Islands of, and trafficked upon the Sea: And as the Waters of *Nile*, in another Plague of *Egypt* were *turned into Blood*, and the Fishes in that great River died; (*Exod.* vii. 17, 18.) so every one in those Parts, who owned, and lived in Subjection to the popish Power, was in Danger of being mortally wounded, and of his Blood being congealed, like that of a dead Man; thereby intimating that vast Multitudes would perish in the Wars, that would mostly be carried on by Sea; Which may be considered as referring to the Wars that ensued upon the Pope's claiming a Power of excommunicating and deposing Emperors, and to the holy Wars, that he set on Foot for recovering *Jerusalem*, and the Sepulchre of our Lord and the holy Land, from the *Saracens*, who had taken Possession of it; in which Wars many Hundred Thousands of Papists lost their Lives: All which came to pass between the Year *One Thousand and Forty, and Eleven Hundred and Ninety.*

4 *And the third Angel poured out his Vial upon the Rivers*

VIAL. III.] 4. And the *third* Angel poured out his Cup of divine Wrath on *the Rivers and Fountains of Waters*; which may also signify a Multitude of People in some prin-

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the Period of 1260 Years, after the Pope had obtained his temporal Power. And though, among the many different Constructions about their Accomplishment, it don't become us to be positive in either of them; yet Mr. *Lowman*'s pleases me best, as it preserves the Series, as far as they have hitherto appeared by historical Facts, in a most regular Order.——*Wounds, Bruises and putrifying Sores*; *Wounds that stink, and are corrupt, and loathsome Diseases* are striking Figures of a corrupt and miserable Condition, *Isa.* i. 5, 6, and *Ps.* xxxviii. 5, 7. Accordingly the *noisome and grievous Sores* are a fit Emblem to represent a corrupt and calamitous State of the Worshippers of the Beast; and this the but now mentioned learned Writer thinks may relate to "all Sorts of Corruptions that gained Ground, and prevailed in the Romish Church and State, which brought a painful Sore, and was in great Measure the Cause of those many Evils, that for a long Time afflicted the Inhabitants of the Earth, during the Quarrels and Contests between the Successors of *Charles the Great*, and were an Occasion of many other Calamities, that greatly weakened the western Empire by the *Normans* (who were Heathens) invading and ravaging several Parts of it, especially in *France*; by the *Saracens* ravaging *Italy*; and the *Hungarians*, th[illegible] barbarous and brutal People, breaking in upon the *German* Dominions; which was the calamitous State of the western Empire, for above 100 Years from the Death of *Lewis the Pius* A. D. 840, to the Settlement of the *German*-Empire in *Otho* the Great, A. D. 962; and well agrees to the prophetic Description, and to the Time and Order of the Prophecies, with respect to each other." The historical Facts correspondent hereunto, and to the four following Vials, are supported by the Authority of Writers of the greatest Credit, as he has quoted them at large, which, as far as I have had Opportunity of examining them, appear to be faithfully represented.——I readily agree with this, and some other judicious Expositors, that whether we can be certain, as to the precise Times and Contents of each particular Judgment, signified by the several *Vials* in their Order, or not; there is a general Use to be made of the more general Meaning, if we were to understand no more of it, for the Encouragement of Faith and Patience, and for warning us against falling in with the great Apostacy of this Period.

and Fountains of Waters; and they became Blood.

cipal Countries of the Popedom; and thereupon, as the Streams, Rivers, Ponds and Pools, as well as the great River *Nile*, in the forementioned Plague of *Egypt*, became Blood; (*Exod.* vii. 19—21.) so it was intimated that these Countries should be filled with Blood; Which may be considered as referring to the dreadful civil Wars between the *Guelphs* and *Gibellines*, and between Popes and Emperors, that continued for above a hundred Years, and occasioned vast Effusions of the Blood of the Inhabitants of Cities, Towns and Villages in most Parts of *Italy*, between the Year *Twelve Hundred, and Thirteen Hundred Seventy one*, which cut off Abundance of the Pope's Dependents, and was a great Diminution of his Power.

5 *And I heard the Angel of the Waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.*

5. And no sooner had this Angel executed his Commission for pouring out his Vial of divine Wrath upon the Countries, signified by the Rivers and Fountains of Waters to turn them into Blood, than I heard him say, with a Voice of solemn Adoration and Praise, Just and righteous are these awful Dispensations of thy Providence, O Lord, who in thy Being and Perfections, Counsels and Appointments, art, and ever wast, and wilt be from Everlasting to Everlasting unchangeably the same: Thy Ways of Judgment ever have been, are, and will be all righteous; and thou must and shalt be justified in them, and particularly in the Judgment now denounced; because, in this Way of Retribution, thou hast justly retaliated upon this persecuting blood-thirsty People the very same sort of Punishment, as they had wickedly inflicted upon thy Church.

6 *For they have shed the Blood of Saints and Prophets, and thou hast given them Blood to drink; for they are worthy.*

6. For they have, in a most cruel Manner, imbrued their Hands in the Blood of thy holy People and ministring Servants, that have suffered Martyrdom, and therein bore an honourable Testimony to thee and thy Cause, and sealed it with their Blood; Which may be considered as referring to the *Waldenses* and *Albigenses*, great Numbers of which had been lately persecuted unto Death at the Instigation of Pope *Innocent* the Third *; who also set up a bloody Court of *Inquisition*, about the Year *Twelve Hundred and Twelve*: And therefore thou hast given them a Cup of Wrath to drink, by sending the Sword among them, that they may

* The *Waldenses* were so called from *Waldo*, a Citizen of *Lyons* in *France*; and the *Albigenses* took their Name from *Albi*, another City of *France* in the Upper *Languedoc*, where they first appeared; and their Opinions were mostly the same with those of the *Waldenses*, who declared against the Authority of the Pope, and many Corruptions of the Romish Church; such as *Transubstantiation*, *Purgatory*, *Praying for the Dead*, and *Worshipping of Saints*. These toward the Beginning of the 13th Century were persecuted under the Influence of Pope *Innocent* III. who erected a *Court of Inquisition* for extirpating Heretics, as they were called; In order to which he appointed Commissaries to enquire after them. They that were suspected of Heresy were examined by Torture; and the Accused were not allowed the Privilege of defending themselves, or making any Appeal. At first they were punished with Imprisonment; afterward were put to Death by the Sword, and most commonly, at length, by burning: And in the Year 1212 say some, or 1216 say others, he made *Dominicus*, a *Spaniard*, Inquisitor General. (Vid. *Spanh.* Ecclef. Hist. p. 1657, &c.)

be

be drunken with their own Blood; (Isa. xlix. 26) and hast thereby rewarded their Iniquity upon their own Heads; for by their murderous Cruelties they have highly deserved it.

7 *And I heard another out of the Altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy Judgments.*

7. And the Equity of this divine Procedure was so evident and affecting, that, methought, I immediately heard the Voice of another Angel, who, as it were, personated the Souls under the Altar, that had been long ago slain by *Rome*-Pagan, (*Chap.* vi. 9) ecchoing back to, and joining in this solemn Applause, to signify the Consent and Approbation of the whole Church, saying, *Amen*, I heartily concur with this Ascription of Glory to thy Righteousness in this Way of thy Judgments, O Almighty Jehovah, who hast made known thy great Power herein: Thou art true in fulfilling thy Threatnings of thine Enemies, and faithful in performing thy Promises to thy People; and art undeniably and gloriously just in inflicting this deserved Punishment on such a blood-thirsty Generation; as thou also art in all the Judgments, which thou hast begun to execute, and wilt further carry on, till thou shalt utterly destroy the *Antichristian*, as thou hast the *Pagan*-Persecutors.

8 *And the fourth Angel poured out his Vial upon the Sun; and Power was given unto him to scorch Men with Fire.*

VIAL IV.] 8. And the *fourth* Angel poured out his Cup of divine Wrath on the *Sun*; which, being the Chief of the heavenly Bodies, is a fit Emblem of the supreme Power or Headship over the Church, which is claimed by the Pope, as *Jacob*, the Father of the Family, was signified by *the Sun* in *Joseph*'s prophetic Dream: (Gen. xxxvii. 9, 10.) And the Angel had a Commission, by means of this Judgment, to bring tormenting Distresses on the wicked Men of the Earth, as extreme and destructive as are produced by the most violent burning Heat of the Sun, when it smites the Earth, and its Fruits and Inhabitants, as with Fire in a hot and sultry Day, without any Shade to screen them from it. (See *Ps.* cxxi. 5, 6.)

9 *And Men were scorched with great Heat, and blasphemed the Name of God, which hath Power over these Plagues: And they repented not, to give him Glory.*

9. Accordingly the Popes themselves, together with the Subjects of the Papacy, were as sorely afflicted in Body and Mind, as by the parching and noxious Heat of the Sun, when it shines in full Strength, and burns up all before it; Which may be consider'd as referring to the terrible Calamities, that arose from various Causes, and particularly from the ambitious Intrigues and furious Wars, that were carried on between several Popes for the papal Chair, between the Year *Thirteen Hundred Seventy-eight and Fifteen Hundred and Thirty* †. And under all these piercing Calamities,

† There were many warm Contests between *Urban* and *Clement* VII; and afterward between *Eugene* IV. and *Felix*, besides other intermediate Competitors for the Popedom, which they severally claimed at the same Time. This occasioned Excommunications one of another, and violent Persecutions and Wars, that were severely distressing to themselves, and to their respective Adherents, during the Schism, which, having lasted for above 50 Years, ended about A. D 1447. Here may also be a further Reference to the Schism between the *Greek* and *Latin* Churches, and the Wars between the Christians of the *Eastern* and *Western* Empire, which remarkably weakned *both*, and gave the *Turks* an Advantage,

2

mities, they who suffered by them were enraged at them; and, like a wicked People of old, *fretted themselves and cursed their God*, (Isa. viii. 21) quarrelling with, and reproaching his Providence, who had Power to inflict, or remove these Punishments: And they hardned themselves in their cruel and idolatrous Practices, and evil Ways, and obstinately refused to give Glory to him, by acknowledging the Justice of his Dealings with them, and by confessing their Iniquities, and accepting the Punishment of them, or forsaking them, but still persisted in them; Which may be supposed to refer to their barbarous and perfidious Persecutions of *John Huss*, and *Jerome* of *Prague*, notwithstanding all the Judgments, which they themselves were groaning under.

10 *And the Fifth Angel poured out his Vial upon the Seat of the Beast; and his Kingdom was full of Darkness: and they gnawed their Tongues for Pain.*

VIAL V.] 10. And, next in Order, the *Fifth* Angel poured out his Cup of divine Wrath upon *the Throne* (θρόνον) of the Antichristian-Beast, the Emblem of his *Power*; which in prophetic Stile is signified by a *Throne*; (2 Sam. iii. 10, and vii. 16, and 1 *Kings* i. 37, 47) And may be consider'd as referring to the great Shock, that was given to the Authority and Dominion of the Pope, by the glorious *Protestant-Reformation*, when, between the Year *Fifteen Hundred and Thirty*, and *Sixteen Hundred and Fifty*, it was completely established, and many Nations fell off from him, and turned their Arms against him; and others retrenched their Obedience to his Authority; which was a great Eclipse of his Glory and Diminution of his Power, and a sore Vexation to his Spirit, and to the Subjects of his Kingdom, which, like one of the Plagues of *Egypt*, Exod. x. 21—23) was full of hideous Darkness, the Emblem of disconsolate Sorrow and Affliction; (*Isa.* v. 30, and ix. 1) and was so distressing to them, that they raged like Persons, who bite their Tongues for Madness and Extremity of Anguish.

11 *And blasphemed the God of Heaven, because of their Pains and their Sores, and*

11. And instead of being reclaimed by these Troubles from their Superstition, Idolatry and Persecutions, they continued inveterate Enemies to Christ and the Gospel; and, in effect, spoke opprobriously of the great Lord of Heaven

Advantage, which issued in their taking *Constantinople* about A.D. 1453, and putting an End to the *Eastern* Empire. Others still further take in the Consideration of a pestilential Distemper, which spread like Fire in *Germany* about A.D. 1529, and had infected *England* in a sweating Sickness some Years before. All which Events were between the Year 1378 and 1530. Within this Period was the Council of *Constance*, which about A.D. 1414, condemned *John Huss*, and afterwards *Jerome* of *Prague* to be burnt to Death for opposing the Pope; and they were accordingly executed, contrary to the most solemn Promises of safe Passports, under Pretence, that *no Faith is to be kept with Heretics.* (See, for these Facts, the Authorities quoted in Mr. *Lowman's* History of them.)——Some have included these villainous Executions in *the scorching Heat of the Sun.* But as all the Judgments, signified by the *Vials*, were to fall on the *papal Party*, I can scarce think that this Vial related to the Death of those noble Witnesses against the Corruptions of *Rome*; though, probably, it might to the *Vexation*, which their brave Testimony to the Death gave their Adversaries, and to the *Bohemian*-War, that was occasioned by this Decree of the Council of *Constance*, and the Execution of it, which cost great Numbers of Papists their Lives. And their going into these violent Measures, whilst the Hand of God lay so heavy upon them, may, perhaps, be pointed at, by *their not repenting to give him Glory.*

repented not of their Deed

and Earth, on Account of his bringing many painful Anxieties and sore Rebukes upon them, though it were for their Iniquities; Which may be considered as pointing at their reviling the first Reformers, and their Adherents, as *Schismatics*, *Heretics* and *Apostates*, and inveighing against their Separation and the Means used to support it, though apparently under the Conduct of the God of Heaven, as unlawful, damnable and rebellious: And so blind and hardned were their Hearts, that they would take no Conviction of the Evil of their Doings, as the procuring Cause of all the Punishments that befell them; Which might refer to the Council of *Trent*, that, notwithstanding all the Light of the Reformation, established the whole System of their corrupt Doctrines and idolatrous Worship; the Council beginning in the Year of our Lord 1545, and ending in the Year 1563.

12 *And the sixth Angel poured out his Vial upon the great River Euphrates; and the Water thereof was dried up, that the Way of the Kings of the East might be prepared.*

VIAL VI.] 12. And the *sixth* Angel pour'd out his Cup of divine Wrath upon the great River *Euphrates*, which, literally taken, was the Eastern Part of the *Roman*-Empire, and the Barrier of the *Assyrian* and *Babylonian*-Empires; and so was a proper Emblem of the Eastern-Boundaries of the Papal Kingdom: And by the pouring out of this Vial the Barrier was destroyed, that had prevented Invasions from those Quarters upon the Popedom; which, in Allusion to the draining of *Euphrates* by *Cyrus*, when he took *Babylon*, (Isa. xliv. 27, 28, Jer. l. 38, and li. 36, 37.) * may be signified by the drying up of the Waters of the great River *Euphrates*, that a Passage might be opened for the *Turks*, or some Princes of Eastern-Countries, to invade mystical *Babylon*; And may be supposed to relate to some powerful Invasion of the Kingdom of the Papacy by that People, as a future Judgment, which is not yet executed upon it; but is still to come, as the next is that shall follow it; and is to be pray'd and waited for with Faith and Patience, and to be explained by Events, which shall as certainly be brought to pass, in God's Time, to fulfill these Parts of the Prophecy, as any of the foregoing have been, and as all the rest shall be, in their Order.

* See Dean *Prideaux*'s Account at large of the *draining of the* River *Euphrates* by *Cyrus* at his taking *Babylon*, (*Connect.* Part I. Book 2. p. 121, &c. Edit. 4th.)—There are indeed several other Interpretations of this *Vial*, than that supposed in the Paraphrase, which may be seen in many Expositors. Some refer it to the Conversion of the *Jews*, as signified by *the Kings of the East*, in order to which the *Turkish* Empire is to be weakned: Others think that some newly-converted Princes of the *East* will pass *Euphrates* to join with the true Church of Christ: Others understand it as relating to the Ruin of the *Turkish* Empire, or *Eastern Antichrist*: Others, to the Removal of Obstacles, such as the Terror of the Bulls, Edicts and Censures of *Rome*, that had before prevented the Princes of *Europe* from invading the Pope's Dominions, but will no longer be a Terror or Bar to them, which these Writers suppose may be signified by the figurative *Euphrates* being *dried up*. But I humbly apprehend that we want Light, sufficient to determine any Thing particularly about such an obscure Representation of this *Vial*, till the Providence of God shall turn the Prophecy into a History, in the Fulfilment of it, by some eminent Judgment upon the Papacy, greater than all that has preceded it.

13 *And I saw three unclean Spirits like Frogs* come *out of the Mouth of the Dragon, and out of the Mouth of the Beast, and out of the Mouth of the false Prophet.*

13. And I further saw, in my Vision of what would come to pass under this *Vial*, a figurative Representation of three impure Spirits, which, in Allusion to another Plague of *Egypt*, (Exod. viii. 3—6.) were as filthy and loathsome, as the Frogs that crept into their Bed-Chambers, and crawled about on the Earth and in the Waters; And may be considered as an Emblem of the Activity, Trouble and Mischief of these wicked Spirits, which were represented as proceeding, one out of the Mouth of the great Dragon, the Devil; (*Chap.* xii. 9.) another out of the Mouth of the Antichristian-Beast, which has seven Heads and ten Horns with Crowns upon them; (*Chap.* xiii. 1.) and a third out of the Mouth of the second Representation of the Antichristian-Beast, which appeared with two Horns like a Lamb, but spoke as a Dragon; (*Chap.* xiii. 11.) which may also be fitly stiled the false Prophet. (*Chap.* xix. 20, and xx. 10.) These united together in sending forth their Emissaries, such as the Jesuits, Monks and Friars and secular Clergy, to creep into the secret Councils of Princes, that they might corrupt them, as the Frogs of *Egypt* crept into the Chambers of the King; (*Exod.* viii. 3.) and to spread wicked Principles and Practices by their Influence.

14 *For they are the Spirits of Devils working Miracles, which go forth unto the Kings of the Earth, and of the whole World, to gather them to the Battle of that great Day of God Almighty.*

14 For these Ecclesiastics are of the very same Spirit and Temper with the infernal Demons, who excite and influence them to make false Pretences and Appearances of working Miracles, as the Magicians of *Egypt* did, that by these *lying Wonders*, and other crafty Methods, they might deceive the Princes of the Earth, and particularly of the Papal Empire; and might stir up all the Inhabitants of the World, whom they could draw into their Interest, to engage them to join together as a formidable Army, that should set themselves in Battle-Array against Christ and his Church, in their last united and most vigorous Opposition to the Almighty God, who is infinitely stronger than all his Enemies.

15 *Behold, I come as a Thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his Garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his Shame.*

15. As this will be a Time of great Trial to the Church, The Lord Jesus said, Observe what I now declare beforehand, for their Caution and Comfort, I will come as suddenly, surprisingly and unexpectedly, as a Thief in the Night, to the Destruction of my Antichristian-Enemies, and the Deliverance of my People from their Power. Happy, and only happy is that Man, who in a prepared Waiting and Looking for it shall be found all along, and at that Day, to be upon his Watch, like one who by that Means keeps his Garments from the Thief that would rob him of them; and to maintain his Faith in me for Righteousness unto eternal Life, and his Integrity and Soundness in Principles and Manners, unspotted by the defiling Doctrines and Practices of Popery; lest, at my coming to take Vengeance on that Party, he be exposed to Disgrace and Confusion, like the Man who had not on a Wedding Garment; (*Matth.* xxii. 11, 12.) and lest, in the Sight of numerous

merous Spectators, he have nothing to cover the Shame of his Nakedness.

16 *And he gathered them together into a Place called in the Hebrew Tongue, Armageddon.*

16. And it was still further represented to me, that, in this last Struggle against the Church, the Devil, as working in and by wicked and seducing Spirits, would muster all his Forces together as in a Field of Battle, which, for the dreadful Slaughter that would then be made of his Armies, may be compared to that famous Place, which, according to the Signification of the *Hebrew* Word *Armageddon*, is the Mountain of *Megiddo* (הר־מגדו) in the Tribe of *Manasseh*; (Josh. xvii. 11.) and may be called the *Mountain of Destruction*, where *Sisera* was defeated, and his numerous Host cut off by *Barak* with the Edge of the Sword; (*Judg.* iv. 15, *&c.* and v. 19.) and where King *Josiah*, for his imprudent Rashness, was slain by *Pharaoh Necho*, King of *Egypt*; (2 *Kings* xxiii. 29, 30.) on which Account the greatest Lamentations were proverbially expressed by *mourning in the Valley of* Megiddon. (*Zech.* xii. 11, 12.)

17 *And the seventh Angel poured out his Vial into the Air; and there came a great Voice out of the Temple of Heaven, from the Throne, saying, It is done.*

VIAL VII.] 17. And upon this grand Defeat of Antichristian-Powers, The *seventh* and last of the Angels pour'd out his Cup of divine Wrath into *the Region of the Air*, which encompasses the whole Earth, as an Emblem of the Vengeance that should be executed upon Satan, *the Prince of the Power of the Air*, *the Spirit that works in the Children of Disobedience*; and upon all the Demons, which are the *Rulers of the Darkness of this World*, and *spiritual Wickednesses in high Places:* (Eph. ii. 2, and vi. 12.) And to shew that this would be the Destruction of Satan's Empire, and of all the Enemies of the Church with him, I heard a loud majestic Voice, proceeding from the Throne of God in his heavenly Temple, saying, The great Work is now accomplished; it, according to a former Hint, that has been given of the Mystery of God, as to be finished, (*Chap.* x. 7.) is now brought to its Issue; This last Cup of divine Wrath has completed the Judgments which God had purposed to execute, unto the total Overthrow and Ruin of Satan and all his Agents, that they may no longer pervert the Doctrines of the Gospel, or persecute Christ's faithful Servants.

18 *And there were Voices, and Thunders, and Lightnings; and there was a great Earthquake, such as was not since Men were upon the Earth, so mighty an Earthquake,* and *so great.*

18. And as a further lively Emblem of this, methought, I heard and saw in the Air, into which this last Vial was poured, such tremendous and astonishing Sounds, and Cracks of Thunder, and Flashes of Lightning, as though the whole Frame of the aerial Heavens were dissolving; and these were attended with such a terrible and universal Earthquake, and of such mighty Force, as was never felt since the Earth was peopled; Which may be supposed to represent such amazing Convulsions and Commotions in this World, as should make a thorough Change in the whole System of its religious Affairs, to the intire Destruction of the Dominion of the Devil, together with all Antichristian-

Powers upon Earth; and to the ſetting up of that glorious State of the Church, in which, as has been hinted, (*Chap.* xi. 15) *the Kingdoms of this World ſhall become the Kingdoms of the Lord and of his Chriſt*; and will be a lively Image of the heavenly State of perfect Happineſs, when *God will make all Things new.* (Chap. xxi. 5.)

19 *And the great City was divided into three Parts, and the Cities of the Nations fell: And great Babylon came in Remembrance before God, to give unto her the Cup of the Wine of the Fierceneſs of his Wrath.*

19. And the immediate Effect of this amazing *Cataſtrophe*, as repreſented in Viſion, was, that the great City of *Rome*, the Head of the papal Empire, and all under its Juriſdiction, were terribly ſhatter'd, and divided into three Parts, to be deſtroy'd by three Sorts of Puniſhment, in Alluſion to the Threatnings denounced againſt *Jeruſalem* and the apoſtate *Jews* for their Abominations, when God ſaid, *A third Part of thee ſhall die with the Peſtilence, and with Famine ſhall they be conſumed in the Midſt of thee; and a third Part ſhall fall by the Sword round about thee; and I will ſcatter a third Part into all the Winds, and I will draw out a Sword after them:* (Ezek. v. 12.) And, together with the capital City of the Antichriſtian-Empire, the other Cities under its Dominion, and the Cities of all Nations that oppoſed Chriſt and his Goſpel, fell in the wide-ſpreading Ruins: And the whole of that idolatrous and perſecuting Body, which is myſtically called *Babylon*, (Chap. xvii. 5) and *Sodom*, and *Egypt*, (Chap. xi. 8) and ſeemed to be forgotten of God, through his Long-ſuffering and Patience, was now remember'd by him to take Vengeance upon her for all her Wickedneſs, Corruptions and Oppreſſions, to make her drink the Dregs of the Cup of his fierce Indignation, as filled up with the moſt deadly Ingredients, without Mixture of Mercy, (*Chap.* xiv. 10) in the ſevere Puniſhments that were inflicted upon her, by way of Retaliation for her having made *the Inhabitants of the Earth drunk with the Wine of her Fornication.* (Chap. xvii. 2.)

20 *And every Iſland fled away, and the Mountains were not found.*

20. And as Earthquakes ſometimes ſwallow up Iſlands, and overturn Mountains, this Puniſhment was repreſented to be ſo extenſive, as to reach every Place where Antichriſtian-Enemies dwelt, that they might no longer be found, either on the Iſlands, or Continents of the Earth; and that the Idols, which were wont to be worſhipped upon Mountains, might be utterly deſtroy'd.

21 *And there fell upon Men a great Hail out of Heaven,* every Stone *about the Weight of a Talent: And Men blaſphemed God becauſe of the Plague of the Hail; for the Plague thereof was exceeding great.*

21. And, to ſet forth the univerſal and total Ruin of the Devil's Empire, there were not only Repreſentations of Thunder, Lightning and an Earthquake, to deſtroy Cities, Towns and Villages, and to overthrow Iſlands and Mountains within its Dominion; but whereſoever Men fled, as in Caſes of Earthquakes they uſe to do into the Fields, to eſcape Danger, there was no Safety for them; but prodigious Storms of Hail, like one of the Plagues of *Egypt*, (Exod. ix. 22—25) though inexpreſſibly more terrible than *that*, or than the Storm of Hail-Stones which fell upon the *Amorites*, (Joſh. x. 11) or than any other before or after thoſe

those, were showered down from Heaven upon them, to crush and dash them to Pieces: Every Stone of which seem'd to be of such an astonishing Size, as if it were a Talent in Weight: And yet these obdurate impenitent Wretches, instead of taking Conviction of their Iniquities, and saying, even so much as the hard-hearted *Pharoah* did under the Plague of Hail, *the Lord is righteous, and we are wicked,* (Exod. ix. 27) spake blasphemously against the Providence of God therein, as if he had dealt unjustly by them: For their Distress and Anguish, by means of this last Cup of his Wrath, was intolerably tormenting to them, as will be found, in God's appointed Time, for finishing their Destruction. (*Chap.* xviii.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

How manifestly righteous are the Judgments of God, that shall be executed, in due Season, upon Antichristian-Idolaters and Persecutors, and all the Wicked and Ungodly of the Earth! They act under the Influence of unclean diabolical Spirits, which deceive the Nations, and set them as in Battle-Array against the Almighty; and, instead of being reformed by one and another Judgment, they obstinately persist in their iniquitous Course, and blaspheme the Name of God, as though he dealt unjustly in punishing them. But, how long soever he may bear with them, he has his set-Time for calling their Sins to Remembrance, and pouring out the Vials of his righteous Wrath upon them. And, ah! how dreadful are the Calamities, which he sooner or later, will inflict upon them! They are as grievous and tormenting as the sorest Ulcers; as nauseous and mortal, as Seas and Rivers of Blood; as distressing, as the most scorching Heat of the Sun, which, like Fire, burns up all before it; as doleful, as the thickest Darkness; as exposed to every invading Misery, as a Country that has no Barrier for its Defence; and as terrifying and overwhelming, as inexpressible Tempests of Thunder, Lightning, Earthquakes and the heaviest Storms of Hail, beyond all that ever was felt on the Earth. In this manner shall the Worshippers of the Beast, and all Antichristian Enemies, drink of the Wrath of God, till, at length, they, together with the whole Kingdom and Power of Satan, shall be utterly destroy'd. And who must not say that they are worthy of all this, as a just Return upon them for the Blood of the Saints, which they have shed; and for all their abominable Idolatries, and other multiplied Corruptions in Doctrine, Worship and Manners? God will be applauded, as holy, righteous and true in these Executions of Wrath; and his Church must say *Amen* to his judging thus concerning all, that oppressed and tyrannized over them during the Reign of the Beast! With what sudden and unexpected Surprize will this tremendous Day of the Lord come, like a Thief in the Night! Blessed are they that shall then be found upon their Watch, and appear with spotless Robes of Righteousness and Honour before him.

CHAP. XVII.

One of the seven Angels, which had the seven Vials, explains the Meaning of the former Vision of the Antichristian-Beast that was to reign 1260 *Years, and then to be destroy'd, whom he describes under the Figure of a great Whore sitting on many Waters, and on a scarlet Beast, attired in purple and scarlet and other Deckings, and bearing the Name of Mystery,* Babylon *the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth,* 1—6. *Interprets the Mystery of the Woman, and the Beast that had seven Heads and ten Horns,*

Horns; and of the many Waters on which she sat, who is overcome by the Lamb, and brought to condign Punishment by means of the ten Kings that had supported her, 7—18.

TEXT.

1 *AND there came one of the seven Angels which had the seven Vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither, I will shew unto thee the Judgment of the great Whore, that sitteth upon many Waters;*

PARAPHRASE.

1. AFTER the foregoing Visions, one of the seven Angels, who were employed as Ministers of Justice to pour out the seven Cups of divine Wrath upon Antichrist, came forth and communed in a familiar Manner with me, as an Angel of the Lord formerly did with the prophet *Zechariah*, (Chap. i. 9, *&c.*) to explain who, and what were meant by the Representations which had been made of her, saying to me, Come near, and I will give you an Account of her Sins, and of God's righteous Proceedings in condemning and punishing her, who may fitly be compared to a great Strumpet, that *says in her Heart, I sit a Queen, and shall see no Sorrow*; (Chap. xviii. 7.) and sits with magnificent Pomp and Power, Ease, Luxury, and Allurements on the Surface of many Waters, the Emblem of her Jurisdiction over many Nations and People: The more particular Meaning of which I shall soon set before you, (*ver.* 15—18.

2 *With whom the Kings of the Earth have committed Fornication, and the Inhabiters of the Earth have been made drunk with the Wine of her Fornication.*

2. The Reason of her being called *the great Whore* is; because, like a lewd Woman, she has enticed the Princes and Governors of the *Roman*-Empire, to commit Idolatry with her, which is spiritual Fornication, or Adultery; and the carnally minded People of the Earth, as well as their Rulers, have been intoxicated with her wicked Arts and Allurements, such as her Honours and Preferments, external Pomp of Habits, Processions and Worship, pretended Miracles, Dispensations and Pardons, and other specious Motives, to draw Men into a Compliance with her idolatrous Principles and Practices, as if they had been overcome with strong Wine, or had been bewitched with Love-Potions, to inflame the vicious Inclinations of her *Paramours* or Sweet-Hearts.

3 *So he carried me away in the Spirit into the Wilderness: and I saw a Woman sit upon a Scarlet-coloured Beast, full of Names of Blasphemy, having seven Heads, and ten Horns.*

3. The Angel thereupon conducted me, not corporally, but in a Vision of the Spirit, into a Place of Solitude or Retirement, that I might the better observe and contemplate the State of this Antichristian-Power, during its Tyranny over the Church in the Wilderness; (Chap. xii. 6.) and there I beheld the Representation of a Woman, or the great Antichristian-Whore, (*ver.* 1.) as sitting upon a Beast of Scarlet Colour, in allusion to the Scarlet Robes, which the *Roman* Emperors wore in Time of War, to denote her cruel Persecutions, and her Ascendency over the civil Powers of the Empire, for supporting her Authority and her sanguinary Laws and Executions. This papal Government bore many Inscriptions, which set forth the blasphemous Titles of Idolatry, Infallibility, and Supremacy, that it would assume, or be called and known by; and it had a monstrous Appearance of seven Heads and ten Horns, according to the Representation made of it in my former Vision, (*Chap.* xiii. 1.)

4 *And the Woman was arrayed in Purple, and Scarlet Colour, and decked with Gold and precious Stones, and Pearls, having a Golden Cup in her Hand, full of Abominations, and Filthiness of her Fornication.*

4. And the lewd Woman herself, meaning the ecclesiastical Power of the Pope, that sat upon, and was supported by the civil Power signified by the Beast, was apparell'd with gay and sumptuous Raiment of purple and scarlet Dye; Which may be consider'd as a prophetic Emblem of the Pope and his Cardinals, who are stain'd with the Blood of Martyrs, and the Colours of whose Habits are Purple and Scarlet: And she was adorn'd with rich and glittering Ornaments of Gold and precious Stones and Pearls, as Emblems of her Wealth, Grandeur and Sovereignty; Which may point to the Imperial Authority, and to the vast Pomp of the *Romish* Church, and the extravagant Profusion of its Treasures in adorning its Temples, Relicts and Images, to procure the Veneration of carnal Minds: She was also represented, like the antient *Babylon*, (*Jer*. li. 7.) as having a Golden Cup in her Hand to entice her Devotees to drink of it; which, notwithstanding its fair tempting Appearance, was fill'd with all Manner of abominable Errors and Iniquities, and with the loathsome Impurities of Idolatry, or spiritual Fornication, and Adultery in those that profess Espousals to Christ; And may point at the delusive Charms of Popery in its gaudy Shows, and bold Pretences to Miracles, Pardons and Indulgences, and to being the only true Church, and the like, as Lures to bring People into her Bosom.

5 *And upon her Forehead* was *a Name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.*

5. And upon this Strumpet's Forehead was an Inscription that bore her Name, by which she may easily be known and distinguish'd from all others; a Name importing her to be a MYSTERY OF INIQUITY, (2 *Thess*. ii. 7.) for the Depth, Secrecy and unsearchable Methods of carrying on her wicked Designs *; and in a figurative or mystical Sense BABYLON THE GREAT, meaning the apostate Church of *Rome*; which may be so stiled, as she pretends to be the Catholic Church, and resembles *Babylon* of old, in the large Extent of her Jurisdiction, and in Idolatry, Pride, Luxury, and Oppression: She is the MOTHER, the Parent, Ringleader, Patroness, Supporter and Nourisher of both literal and spiritual Adultery and Fornication, and of all ABOMINABLE UNCLEANNESS, and every other Sort of notorious Crimes, which abound in the Nations of the Earth, that are under her Dominion.

6 *And I saw the Woman drunken with the Blood of the Saints, and with the Blood of the Martyrs of Jesus:*

6. And I further beheld this whorish Woman to be filled, and glutted with the Blood of those, whom God had set apart for himself and sanctified by his Spirit, and of Christ's faithful Witnesses, who sealed their Testimony to him with their Blood, which she shed on Account of their open Con-

* *Scaliger*, *Downham* and others observe, that the Word *Mystery* was formerly wrote on the Pope's Mitre, till the *Protestants* alledged this Passage of Scripture to prove that the Church of *Rome* was *Antichrist*.

fession

And when I saw her, I wondered with great Admiration.

fession of him: And when I saw her in these unnatural and monstrous Forms, I was exceedingly amazed at her Grandeur and Cruelty, and at the Patience of God in suffering her to reign and tyrannize over his beloved People; as not knowing what to think of one, that would sustain such a pompous, vile and hideous Character.

7 And the Angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the Mystery of the Woman, and of the Beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven Heads and ten Horns.

7. Hereupon the Angel observing it, said to me, Why did you seem to be so greatly astonished and confounded at this Representation? I will explain the Meaning of these Emblems, which are so dark and mysterious to you, concerning this whorish Woman, and the Beast she rides upon, and which appear in this Vision, according to what you had seen before, (*Chap.* xiii. 1.) as having seven Heads and ten Horns. That which is figured out in this prophetic Description is, as follows:

8 The Beast that thou sawest, was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless Pit, and go into Perdition: And they that dwell on the Earth shall wonder (whose Names were not written in the Book of Life from the Foundation of the World) when they behold the Beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

8. The Beast, which you saw, is a Symbol of the *Roman*-Empire, as antiently governed by *Kings*, *Consuls*, *Dictators*, *Decemvirs* and *military Tribunes*, but is no longer subsisting in either of those Forms, it being now, at the Time of this Vision, under the Government of *Emperors*; or when the Time comes, which the Vision refers to, it may then be said, that the Beast, signifying the *Roman*-Empire, was idolatrous and persecuting under *Heathen-Magistrates*, but its *Pagan-State* is now destroyed; and the Empire, headed by the *Papacy*, will be of such a diabolical, wicked and tyrannical Temper, as derives its Original, and proceeds from the infernal malignant Spirits of the bottomless Pit, and will be supported by their Instigation and Assistance: But, at length, the papal Church, which had been destructive to the true Church of Christ on Earth, shall be utterly destroyed and sent down to Hell, to share in Torments with their Instigators: And (excepting those, whom God has *chosen in Christ before the Foundation of the World*, (Eph. i. 4, and see the Note on 1 *John* i. 1.) and who are as particularly known by Name, as if they were literally registered for eternal Life in the Book of his Decrees, and in the Book of the Lamb, as Persons that were given of the Father to him, to be redeemed, and sanctified, and saved by him) the Inhabitants of the popish Territories will gaze with Admiration, Pleasure and superstitious Veneration, when they shall see this Beast, which in the forementioned Senses was, and is not, † and yet exists in another Form, and will be the same, in effect, as a persecuting and idolatrous paganizing Power, which, in Resemblance of the Worship of *Heathen-Idols*, will introduce the Worship of Angels, Saints and Images.

† The Conjectures about the Meaning of this Phrase, *the Beast which was, and is not, and yet is*, or *and shall be* (καὶ πάρεσται) as *Steven*'s and the *Alexandrian*, and several other Copies have it, are so many and dubious, that it is hard to say, which of them may be depended upon. But one or other of the two Senses given in the Paraphrase appears to me as probable as any; and the Reader is left to chuse that which pleases him best.

9 *And here* is *the Mind which hath Wisdom. The seven Heads are seven Mountains, on which the Woman sitteth.*

9. And here is a proper Trial and Exercise for a studious and inquisitive Mind, that has a Faculty of discerning, and spiritual Wisdom to understand, reflect upon and compare the Representation of Characters, which are given in the preceding and following Parts of this Vision, as a Key to open the Meaning of it. It is therefore carefully to be observed and considered, that the seven Heads of this idolatrous persecuting Power, signified by *the Beast*, are emblematical of the seven Mountains or Hills, on which, as is notorious, the City of *Rome* is built, and on which, as on an imperial Seat, the great whorish Woman is represented as fixing her Throne, with as much Power and Authority, as any Ruler of the Empire, that had ever gone before her.

10 *And there are seven Kings: five are fallen, and one is,* and *the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short Space.*

10. And for a further understanding of this romish Antichristian-Power, it is to be observed, as another distinguishing Character of it, that there will have been seven Kings, or different Forms of supreme Government, which are also signified by seven Heads; five of which at the Time of this Vision are abolished, as they consisted of a Succession of *Kings*, *Consuls*, &c. according to what has been hinted; (*ver.* 8.) and one, even that of *Pagan*-imperial Government, is at this present Time subsisting; * And another which is to succeed it, namely, that of the *Christian*-Emperors, has not yet mounted the Throne; and, when this arises, it will continue but for a little while, compared with the other supreme Powers that went before, and will follow after it; Which may be considered as pointing to *Constantine the Great*, and his Successors, under whom the Christian-Religion was established, and maintained with Purity scarce a Century and half; all which Forms of Government are to cease in their Order, before *that* shall appear, which is intended by the Antichristian-Beast in this prophetic Emblem.

11 *And the Beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into Perdition.*

11. And the *Roman*-civil Power, on which the Scarlet Whore appeared to sit, (*ver.* 3.) and which, as has been said, (*ver.* 8.) was antiently administered in various Forms of Government, and at the Time of this Vision is not subsisting in either of those Forms, but shall hereafter rise as an idolatrous Power under her Influence. This may be reckoned an *eighth* Form of supreme Government, in case you consider *that* under *Constantine the Great* and his Successors as the *seventh*. But if you consider the imperial Go-

* *Kings* in prophetic Stile signify *States* or *Kingdoms*, as appears from *Dan.* vii. 17, 23; and if, with several learned Commentators, we take the *sixth* King to denote *simply* the imperial Form of Government, the Powers of which were the same under *Pagan* and *Christian*-Emperors; then, as Mr. *Lowman* thinks, the *seventh* Head may point at the Reign of the *Gothic* Kings, or at the Exarchate of *Ravenna*, which succeeded the Destruction of the imperial Government, and was in some respects a new Form of Government different from that, and yet retained so much of its *senatorial* Form, as to make it in that Respect much of the same Kind with the *sixth*: So that in some respects, according to this and another way of reckoning, as in the Paraphrase, it may be called a *seventh* Head or Form of Government; and in that way of reckoning the papal Beast may be called the *eighth*; and yet on other Accounts the Beast may be reckoned the *seventh*, as succeeding to the *sixth*, or the imperial Form of Government.

vernment of *Constantine* and his Successors as truely *Christian*, and so no Head of *Idolatry*, as all the preceding Governments were; then the *Roman*-Power, signified by the Beast, is to be reckoned only one of the *seven*, even the last of them in Succession; and so points out the Papacy, which is to have its Seat at *Rome*, with the Pope and his Consistory of Cardinals at the Head of it, and all the civil Power of the Empire to support it; which will as certainly in God's appointed and predicted Time be finally destroyed, as all the idolatrous Heads have been in their Order, that went before it.

12 *And the ten Horns which thou sawest, are ten Kings, which have received no Kingdom as yet; but receive Power as Kings one Hour with the Beast.*

12. And another sure Note of the Antichristian-Power is, that the ten Horns, which you saw on the Head of the papal Beast, (*ver.* 3.) signify ten Kings or Principalities, that shall arise in the Western Part of the *Roman*-Empire, as to be divided into ten Kingdoms; but none of these Potentates have received their distinct Kingdoms at the Time of this Vision, but shall receive them as sovereign Princes, about the same Time, * that the papal Beast or Antichristian-Power shall begin to erect its idolatrous Empire; Which may be considered as an Intimation, that the Rise of the Pope should be at the Time when the Empire would be divided into ten Kingdoms by the barbarous Nations, about the middle of the fifth Century, soon after *Gensericus*, the *Vandal*, had taken *Rome*; and so the *Man of Sin* would be revealed, when the Empire *that let* or *hindered*, while it was under one Head, should be taken away. (2 *Thes.* ii. 3—8.)

13 *These have one Mind, and shall give their Power and Strength unto the Beast.*

13. These ten Kingdoms, with sovereign Princes at their Head, how different soever they may be in secular Interests, will be of the same Mind in religious Concerns, and, as with one Heart, agree to pay Homage to the papal Power signified by the Beast, and to surrender up their Riches, Arms and Authority (ἐξουσιαν) to his Will, and use them to support his Supremacy and idolatrous Interests and Designs.

14 *These shall make War with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings; and*

14. These, under the Influence of the papal Beast, will set themselves against Christ, to oppose his Doctrines, Institutions, Cause, Interest and People, by violent Persecutions, and the Power of the Sword, and to force their Consciences into Submission, and blind Obedience to the pretended Infallibility and ecclesiastical Authority, Superstition and Idolatry of

* Most Expositors, after Dr. *More*, render *one Hour* (μιαν ὡραν) *the same Time*, as in *ver.* 13, 17, *one Mind* (μιαν γνωμην) plainly signifies *the same Mind* and so *one Heart, and one Soul,* (η καρδια και η ψυχη μια) *Acts* iv. 32, signifies *the same Heart and Soul.* And the Word rendered *Hour* (ὡρα) is often used for and translated, *Time.* This makes the Division of the Empire into ten Kingdoms cotemporary with the Rise of the Beast.—These ten Kingdoms are variously reckoned up by Mr. *Mede* and Sir *Isaac Newton*: But others suppose that there is no Necessity of finding out that exact Number of different Kingdoms, neither more nor less; *Ten* being sometimes put for *Many*, a certain for an uncertain Number. However, all History assures us, that when the Northern Nations broke in upon the Western Empire, it was divided into much about that Number of Kingdoms.

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they that are with him, are called, and chosen, and faithful.

the Pope. But, in the Issue of the Combate, the glorious Lamb of God shall be victorious over them, in and by Means of the Steadfastness of the Faith, Profession and patient Sufferings of his Members, who will make a noble Stand against all their Enemies, and love not their Lives unto Death: For he by Nature as God, and by Constitution as Mediator, is the sovereign Lord of all earthly Lords, and sovereign King over all the Potentates of this World, as the Government of the Church and of all Nations is upon his Shoulders, to order and dispose of them, according to his infinitely wise and holy Will: And his Disciples, who side with him against those common Enemies, are effectually called by his Grace; are a chosen and peculiar People, whom God has set apart for himself in his eternal Purpose; and, in Consequence of their Election and effectual Calling, are made sincere and faithful to him in their Profession of his Name and Gospel, and Perseverance in his Ways and Ordinances, whatever it may cost them.

15 *And he saith unto me, The Waters which thou sawest, where the Whore sitteth, are Peoples, and Multitudes, and Nations, and Tongues.*

15. And still further to explain the distinguishing Marks of the Antichristian-Whore, the Angel said to me, The Representation that was made of *many Waters*, on which she sits, (*ver.* 1.) are an Emblem of the People of the Papacy under her extensive Empire, and of the vast Multitude of them of different Nations and various Languages, over which she reigns as a Queen, and by which she is supported in her Dominion, Riches and Grandeur; and says she *shall see no Sorrow.* (Chap. xviii. 7.)

16 *And the ten Horns which thou sawest upon the Beast, these shall hate the Whore, and shall make her desolate, and naked, and shall eat her Flesh, and burn her with Fire.*

16. And yet the *ten Horns*, which were represented in your Vision of the Beast, and have been interpreted to signify ten distinct States or Kingdoms, (ver 12.) and which, amidst all the Revolutions and Alterations that may be made in them, * will subsist under such like distinct Governments, during the Reign of the Beast, and never be swallowed up in a universal Monarchy by any that may aspire after it: Even these very Nations or Kingdoms, with their respective Potentates, which were before engaged in the Support and Advancement of the whorish Woman, shall in God's appointed Time grow weary of her Tyranny, Oppressions, Frauds and abominable Corruptions in Doc-

* The *States* or *Kingdoms*, signified by the *ten Horns*, are to be, at length, the Instruments of the *Ruin*, as they formerly were of the *Support* of Antichrist. This supposes a continued Succession of *distinct* Nations, that originally belonged to the *Roman*-Empire; though there may be Shiftings and Changes in them, and they may not always be bounded just in the same Limits, as at the first Division of the Empire among them. (See the Note on *ver.* 12.) And so the Kings *that shall hate the Whore* &c, are to be considered, not as the same individual Persons that at first supported her, but as their *Successors* in various Kindgoms, who will turn against her, as those of the reformed Nations have already; and it is to be expected that most, if not all the rest, will follow their Example, and unite with them in a religious War against the Papacy; though, perhaps, some of them may persist in her idolatrous Communion, till they shall see the Time of her Burning, and bewail her; (*Chap.* xviii. 9.) and then shall either renounce her, or fall with her.

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trine and Practice; and, when they come to see how grossly she had imposed upon them, they shall be incensed against and abhor her, more than they ever before were in love with her; even as Gallants use to behave toward a Strumpet, when they are convinced of her treacherous Delusions, and of the Evil of their former Familiarities with her: And they shall withdraw their Protection of her, and turn their Arms against her, and strip her naked of all her Riches, Pomp and Power, and lay her waste by Fire and Sword, which shall not only destroy her, but be as tormenting to her, as though they were to gnaw her Flesh off from her Bones, and burn her to Death by devouring Flames, as was foretold by the Prophet *Daniel*, (Chap. vii. 11.) and as the Daughter of a Priest guilty of Whoredom was to be burnt. (*Lev.* xxi. 9.)

17 *For God hath put in their Hearts to fulfil his Will, and to agree, and give their Kingdom unto the Beast, until the Words of God shall be fulfilled.*

17. For the great God and Governor of the World, *in whose Hand are the Hearts of Kings*, and who *turns them whithersoever he will*, (Prov. xxi. 1.) has determined to give them up, for a Time, to their own Hearts Lusts, which they freely and out of Choice indulged; (See the Notes on *John* xii. 40, and *Rom.* 9. 18.) He also, by an overruling Providence turned the voluntary Current of their own sinful Inclinations into such a Course, as should eventually accomplish his Purpose, relating to the Rise and Progress of the papal Power; and he permitted them, under the Instigation of Satan and the Workings of their own Corruptions, to agree together to submit to its Authority, Superstition and Idolatry, and to surrender up their Strength, Riches, and even their Crowns, to the Service of this Antichristian-Beast: But he did this only for a limited Season, till all the Words of God, contained in this and antient Prophecies, relating to the flourishing State of its Dominion shall be fulfilled; and then, by a gracious and providential Influence, or both, upon their Hearts, he will incline them to accomplish the Will of his Command and Pleasure, as well as the Will of his Purpose, relating to the utter Destruction of the idolatrous Power, which they supported before. (*v.* 16.)

18 *And the Woman which thou sawest, is that great City, which reigneth over the Kings of the Earth.*

18. And, to conclude the plain Marks of this Antichristian-power, relating to *the Place* of its chief Residence, The Appearance of a whorish drunken Woman, which you saw and so much wondered at, (*ver.* 5, 6.) represents the civil and ecclesiastical Authority and Dominion of the Pope and his Consistory of Cardinals, that is to be seated in, and raised to its Height at *Rome*, the great Metropolis; which, and no other, is at this very Time to be considered as the Mistress of the World, which bears sway over the Kings of the Earth, and particularly over the Nations of the Empire, that hath existed under various successive Forms of Government, but is now imperial, as the Pope's also, in a Manner, will be in reigning over all the Kingdoms, into which the Empire will then be divided.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How plain are the prophetic Marks of the idolatrous and persecuting Power of the Papacy! *This* in a spiritual Sense is the great Whore, who makes blasphemous Pretences, and is deck'd with sumptuous Ornaments; whose distinguishing Colours of purple and scarlet are the Attire of Popes and Cardinals; who has intoxicated Princes and People to join in her Idolatries, and has glutted herself with the Blood of numberless Saints and Witnesses for Christ: She is a Mystery of Iniquity; the very Image of antient *Babylon* for Pride and Luxury, Persecution and Idolatry; and is the grand Parent of spiritual Fornication, and of all abominable Iniquity: She derives her Original from Hell itself; and is the great Beast, that reigns over vast Multitudes of People of all Nations, and draws the Admiration of all under her Dominion, except those that are chosen of God to eternal Life: Her Seat of Empire is at the great City of *Rome*, which is built upon seven Hills, and was the Metropolis of the *Roman*-Monarchy: She rose as the seventh idolatrous and persecuting Head, after the Destruction of those that preceded her, under various Forms of Government, in the *Roman*-Empire; upon the Division of which into ten Kingdoms, she set up her Throne with supreme Authority, making use of their Strength, as ten Horns of Power to support and defend her ecclesiastical Tyranny; and she, by divine Permission, seduced them into a Compliance with her cruel and idolatrous Usurpations, and into a furious Opposition to Christ, his People and Cause. To whom can all these Descriptions agree, but to the *Romish* papal Power? How amazingly monstrous, and yet just, is this divine Portrait of her! And how great a Part of Wisdom is it to find her out, by applying these Characters to her, to whom alone they belong! But O what a Comfort ought it to be to the Church of Christ, and what a Terror to the Antichristian-Harlot, that she, who has been so destructive to others, shall finally go into Perdition! The glorious Lamb, who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, shall overcome her, by animating the Faith and Patience, and emboldening the holy Profession of those that are chosen and call'd, and faithful in their Adherence to him; and in his appointed Time he will turn the Hearts of those very Powers against her, that were before in Love with her, and united all their Forces to uphold her. He will spirit them up to desert, hate and oppose her; to strip her of all her Riches and Grandeur; and to prey upon her, and pursue her with Fire and Sword, till she be utterly destroy'd by as painful a Death, as if her Flesh were to be gnawn off from her Bones, and she to be consumed, as by devouring Fire, in the Conflagration of *Rome*, and by the total Ruin of all the Territories under her Dominion.

CHAP. XVIII.

Another Angel from Heaven proclaims the Fall of mystical Babylon, 1—3. *And another Voice from Heaven admonishes the People of God to come out of her, lest, partaking of her Sins, they partake also of her Plagues,* 4—8. *Represents the Lamentation of Kings, Merchants and Mariners over her,* 9—19. *And calls upon the Church to rejoice in God's taking righteous Vengeance upon her, who had slain the Saints; and whose utter and irrecoverable Ruin is signified by the Emblem of a Milstone thrown with Violence by a mighty Angel into the Sea,* 20—24.

TEXT.

1 *AND after these Things I saw another Angel come down from Heaven,*

PARAPHRASE.

1. AND after the Explication that had been given me in the last Vision of the Woman, and the scarlet-colour'd Beast on which she sat, I beheld another Angel descending from Heaven in most illustrious Splendor,* as

* This *Angel* seems to have been *Christ*, the Angel of the Covenant, with whose *Glory the Earth was lightened*; since it certainly was the Glory of the Jehovah of *Israel*, that lightened the Earth and filled his House, in *Ezekiel*'s Vision, of which this bears a Resemblance. (See the Notes on *Chap.* vii. 2, and viii. 3.)

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having great Power; and the Earth was lightened with his Glory.

dispatch'd with an immediate Commission from thence, and invested with great Power and Authority; and the Church on Earth was irradiated with his surrounding Light and Glory, like what appeared to *Ezekiel* in his Vision of the Glory of the God of *Israel*, which filled the House of the Lord. (*Chap.* xliii. 2—5.)

2 And he cried mightily with a strong Voice, saying, Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the Habitation of Devils, and the Hold of every foul Spirit, and a Cage of every unclean and hateful Bird.

2. And he proclaimed with an exceeding majestic, loud and articulate Voice, saying, in the very Words that foretold, and were accomplished in the Destruction of the *Caldean-Babylon*, (Isa. xxi. 9) to this Effect, The papal Hierarchy and Power, which for Persecution, Pride, Idolatry and all Manner of Abominations, may fitly be stiled mystical *Babylon*, whose Dominion is with great Authority and wide Extent, will soon be as certainly destroy'd, as if it already were actually fallen from all its Riches, Grandeur and Power into the most deplorable Ruins: And to certify this with the greater Vehemence and Assurance, he repeated the Words, *Is fallen, is fallen*; and added that, instead of her former Pomp and Splendor, she shall be as hideous and desolate, as the most depopulated and forlorn Desert, that is haunted by Demons or Satyrs, and all unclean Spirits, which use to rove about in such Places; (*Luke* xi. 24) and that is the Receptacle of doleful Creatures, such as Screech-Owls, Cormorants and Bitterns, and all Sorts of loathsome Fowls, which usually dwell in horrid Ruins and solitary Wildernesses, and make a dismal Noise, according to what was denounced against antient *Babylon*. (Isa. xiii. 19—22, and xiv. 23.)

3 For all Nations have drunk of the Wine of the Wrath of her Fornication, and the Kings of the Earth have committed Fornication with her, and the Merchants of the Earth are waxed rich through the Abundance of her Delicacies.

3. For all Nations under her Jurisdiction have been intoxicated by her Idolatries, that expose her to, and will bring down upon her the dreadful Vengeance of God, which she deserves, and must suffer, for her spiritual Fornication: And she has not only been guilty of this abominable Crime herself; but the earthly Kings, who had given their Power to the Beast, (*Chap.* xvii. 17) have been prevailed upon, by her Inchantments, to support, and join with her in idolatrous Worship, which is spiritual Whoredom; and carnally minded Men, under her Dominion, that deal in her pretended spiritual Wares, especially at *Rome*, such as Pardons, Indulgences, Dispensations, and Popish Trinkets, &c. and that make Merchandise of Mens Souls, (*ver.* 13) have amassed together immense Riches through the strong Inticements of her spiritual Commodities, which have been sold at high Rates, and brought in vast Gains, to feed their own and her Luxury.

4 And I heard another Voice from Heaven, saying, Come out of her, my People, that ye be not Partakers of her Sins, and

4. Hereupon, I heard another solemn Proclamation immediately from the Throne of God in Heaven, saying, in his Love, Care and Tenderness to those that belong to him, but are mingled with this apostate Church, in like Manner as he warned *Israel* to flee from the old *Babylon*, when it was to be destroy'd, (*Isa.* xlviii. 20, and lii. 11, and *Jer.* l. 8,

and

that ye receive not of her Plagues:

and li. 6) Depart, my People, and be ye separate from this myſtical *Babylon*; touch no unclean Thing; but flee with all Speed from it, and openly proteſt againſt it, that ye may have no Communion with, nor ſo much as connive at her idolatrous and wicked Practices, and ſo be Partakers of her Guilt; and that ye may not be involved with her in the dreadful Judgments and Deſolations, which are now coming upon her in the Effuſion of the *ſeventh* and laſt great Vial of my Wrath, according to the Repreſentation that has been made of it, (*Chap.* xvi. 17—21) as the juſt Puniſhment of all her Sins.

5 *For her Sins have reached unto Heaven, and God hath remembered her Iniquities.*

5. For the Multitude of her Iniquities are of ſuch an enormous Size, of ſo high Aggravations and long Continuance, as have made her fully ripe for Judgment: Their provoking Cry, like the Sins of *Sodom* and the antient *Babylon*, (Gen. xix. 13, and Jer. li. 9) have reached up to Heaven; and God is now in his awful and terrible Juſtice coming forth to call them to Remembrance, and to execute complete Vengeance upon her for them.

6 *Reward her even as ſhe rewarded you, and double unto her double, according to her Works: In the Cup which ſhe hath filled, fill to her double.*

6. This is the Time for you, my Servants and People, to repay Tribulation and Diſtreſs to her, by Fire and Sword, in a righteous War againſt her, as the due Reward of her cruel Perſecutions and Oppreſſions of you, and your faithful Predeceſſors in former Ages, according to the Law of Retaliation; (*Exod.* xxi. 23, 24) and ye are commiſſion'd from Heaven to multiply Calamities doubly upon her, to her utter Deſtruction, not from a Spirit of private Revenge, but as authoriſed Inſtruments of divine Juſtice, in puniſhing her to the uttermoſt for all her evil Deeds, according to the Law which, in Caſes of Robbery, required double Reſtitution; (*Exod.* xxii. 4, 7, 9) and according to God's threatning of *Iſrael*'s Enemies, that he *would recompenſe their Iniquity and their Sin double:* (Jer. xvi. 18.) As ſhe has wrung out, and made you drink the Cup of Sorrow and Affliction; ſo now ye are called to fill out to her a Cup of doubly bitter and deadly Ingredients, for her to drink to the very Dregs.

7 *How much ſhe hath glorified herſelf, and lived deliciouſly, ſo much Torment and Sorrow give her: For ſhe ſaith in her Heart, I ſit a Queen, and am no Widow, and ſhall ſee no Sorrow.*

7. In Proportion to her Pride and Self-Confidence, in which ſhe has magnified and exalted herſelf, and to her luxurious way of living, Render to her tormenting Miſery and Anguiſh, in her utter Confuſion and Overthrow: For ſhe, being the Whore on many Waters, (*Chap.* xvii. 15) proudly boaſts of her Dominion over a Multitude of People and Nations in Church and State, and flatters herſelf in her own Conceit, ſaying, in her vain and haughty Mind, like *Babylon* of old, which was called *the Lady of Kingdoms*, (Iſa. xlvii. 5, 8) I ſit with imperial Majeſty, Pomp and Safety, after the Manner of a mighty Queen in her moſt exalted State and firmeſt Eſtabliſhment; and I neither am bereaved of any Dignity, Power, or Pleaſure, like a Widow deprived of her Defence and Strength, Glory and Comfort

in the Loss of her Husband; nor shall my Throne ever be shaken, or any Kind of Tribulation come upon me.

8 *Therefore shall her Plagues come in one Day, Death, and Mourning, and Famine; and she shall be utterly burnt with Fire: For strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.*

8. Because she is thus insolent and vain-glorious, and fondly imagines that no Mischief or Danger can approach her; therefore shall her Punishment and Ruin come unexpectedly, and all on a sudden, as it were in one Day, upon her; as was said of the antient *Babylon*: (Isa. xlvii. 9, 11) Death, by Pestilence, or Sword, or both, shall cut off Multitudes of her Subjects; and Lamentation and Mourning for the Loss of her Children, and Destruction by Famine, or the Want of all necessary Refreshment and Support, shall meet upon her; and she shall be utterly consumed by Fire: (*Chap.* xvii. 16) For the Lord Jehovah, who righteously judges and condemns her, and has determined to destroy her, is almighty; so that there is no resisting his Power, who is able to execute the decreed Vengeance, and will certainly do it.

9 *And the Kings of the Earth, who have committed Fornication, and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the Smoke of her burning,*

9. And so absolute and unavoidable shall her Destruction be, that the earthly-minded Princes and Potentates of this World, who, continuing under her Jurisdiction and in her Communion, have complied with and supported her idolatrous Injunctions and Practices, and indulged themselves in Pomp and Luxury with her, shall not be able to give her any further Assistance, or Protection; but shall bitterly mourn over her helpless State, and lament her doleful Distress and Ruin, when they shall behold the sad Tokens of her Torment and Desolation, as appearing like horrid Pillars of Smoke, that rise up from a raging Fire in the Conflagration of Cities *; and especially when they see *Rome* itself, the Seat of her Dominion, all in Flames through the righteous Vengeance of God upon her.

10 *Standing afar off for the Fear of her Torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great City Babylon, that mighty City! For in one Hour is thy Judgment come.*

10. They being dismay'd at this awful Judgment, and terribly afraid lest they should fall with her in the common Calamity, and so partake of her Plagues, as they had of her Sins, will endeavour to get as far as possible out of the Way of Danger; and standing at a Distance, like Spectators full of Confusion and Astonishment, will cry out in the Anguish of their Souls, Alas! Alas! What dreadful and unexpected Wo and Misery is this! What Desolation and Distress is that great City, which is called mystical *Babylon*, that strong and powerful City, now brought into! What is become of all her Authority, Pomp and Dominion, which are fallen with her! What an amazing Revolution is here!

* *The Smoke of her Torment* may be taken, as in the Paraphrase, either in the *metaphorical* Sense to signify the most dreadful and intire Destruction of all her Pomp and Power, through the whole Extent of the Papacy; or in the *literal* Sense for the Conflagration of *Rome*, the Seat of the Pope's Authority, and the capital City of his Dominion, which will, probably, be destroy'd, either by subterraneous Fire's bursting out of the *Volcano's*, that are frequent in those Parts; or by the Fire of Enemies in besieging it, when the Ten Kings shall *hate the Whore, and burn her with Fire*; (Chap. xvii. 16) or by Fire immediately from Heaven, like that which consumed *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*.

For all on a sudden, as it were in one Hour, that was little thought of before, thy Judgment, Condemnation and Execution are come upon thee, O thou Mistress of the papal World, who *sattest as a Queen* in all thy Grandeur and boasted Security, *saying, I shall see no Sorrow.* (ver. 7.)

11 *And the Merchants of the Earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no Man buyeth her Merchandise any more.*

11. And as the Merchants bewailed the Destruction of antient *Tyre*, that mighty flourishing and trading City; (*Ezek.* xxvii. 37, *&c.*) so the earthly-minded Dealers in the spiritual Merchandise of Antichristian-*Rome*, to put off her Indulgences, Absolutions, popish Relics and Preferments, will, in the Grief of their Hearts, lament with weeping over her, as not being able to afford her any Relief in the Day of her Distress, nor to get any further Advantages by her; because there will then be an intire End of all her gainful Traffic; and from thence forward none will ever be so imposed upon and deluded, as to purchase her ecclesiastical Commodities any more.

12 *The Merchandise of Gold, and Silver, and precious Stones, and of Pearls, and fine Linen, and Purple, and Silk, and Scarlet, and all Thyine Wood, and all manner of Vessels of Ivory, and all manner of Vessels of most precious Wood, and of Brass, and Iron, and Marble,*

12. So that they can no longer delight and Pride themselves in the prodigious Gains, that they were wont to make by this sort of Merchandise: † It will never bring them in, as formerly, Gold, and Silver, and precious Stones, and Pearls, to inrich themselves, and to support and display the Splendor of their Hierarchy and Worship; nor fine Linen, and Purple, and Silk, and Scarlet, to adorn themselves, and make distinguishing Vestments for their Priests, Bishops, Cardinals and Popes; nor Thyine-wood, so much esteemed for its grateful Scent and durable Strength, for building or decorating magnificent Houses and Temples; nor any of those various sorts of Vessels made of Ivory, and of the most beautiful and costly Wood, and of Brass, and Iron, and Marble, which used to be wrought into idolatrous Images, and into all Manner of Utensils for superstitious Services and Ornaments.

13 *And Cinnamon, and Odours, and Ointments, and Frankincense, and Wine, and Oil, and fine Flour, and Wheat, and Beasts, and Sheep, and Horses, and Chariots, and*

13. Nor shall their Merchandise any longer procure to them fragrant Cinnamon, and sweet Odours, and Ointments, and Frankincense, to gratify their Senses and perfume and beautify their Bodies, or to feed their Pride and Luxury, and make their sweet-smelling Incense and costly Ointments for idolatrous and superstitious Purposes; nor Wine and Oil, to cheer their Hearts and make their Faces shine, or to be idolatrously and superstitiously used in the Sacrifice of the

† The Description given in this and the following Verses of the *Merchandise* and *lamented Destruction* of the Romish *Babylon*, need not in all Particulars be taken in a *literal*, but only in an *accommodated* Sense, like what is suggested in the Paraphrase; and may be considered as a strong and striking figurative Representation of her Downfal from all her former State and Affluence; and of the horrible Disappointment, Loss and Trouble, which by that Means will come upon the popish Trafficers in her egregious Impositions and Delusions, who had amassed to themselves vast Riches and Honours in the Days of her Prosperity: And this is beautifully described in most of the very same Terms, that are used in the 26th and 27th Chapters of *Ezekiel*, with relation to *Tyre*, which had been notorious for Idolatry, Wickedness and Power, and for the most gainful and extensive Merchandise.

Slaves, and Souls of Men.

Mass and in extreme Unction; nor fine Flour, and Wheat, and Beasts, and Sheep, to be tythed by the Priests for the Sustenance of Nature, or supplying them with the Necessaries, much less the Conveniences and Comforts of the animal Life; nor Horses, and Chariots, and (σωμάτων) the Bodies of Men, to furnish out a pompous Equipage, and show away with the Magnificence of haughty Popes and Prelates; nor shall they any more enslave Mens Souls by usurping a tyrannical Power over their Consciences, and drawing Money from them for Pardons and Indulgences, and for praying them out of Purgatory, which, in Reality, is being paid for destroying, instead of saving their Souls.

14 *And the Fruits that thy Soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all Things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.*

14. And the Products of your iniquitous Merchandise, O mystical *Babylon*, in which you so much gloried, and of which you were so eagerly desirous, such as the Riches, Honours and Pleasures of this World, which were the Top of your Ambition; all these are now cut off: And all Things that were delicious to the Taste, and made a gay Appearance to the Eye, are now removed far from you, who shall never find your Account in them any more; but shall be intirely stript, and remain destitute of them all, past Retrieve for ever. Thus all the Merchandise of Antichristian-*Rome*, by the Factors of her spurious Wares, shall, like that of the antient wicked *Tyre*, utterly fail, and never be recovered.

15 *The Merchants of these Things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off, for the fear of her Torment, weeping and wailing.*

15. They that dealt in these Commodities, and were inriched in their *temporal*, and vainly boasted of their being so in their *spiritual* Concerns, by her Means, shall, like the Kings of the Earth, (*ver.* 9, 10.) unable to help her, remove and keep at as great a Distance as may be from her, for fear that, as they had been Partakers of her Guilt and Riches, they should share in Torments with her; at the very Sight of which, they will vent the Sorrows of their Hearts with Floods of Tears, and great Lamentation over her.

16 *And saying, Alas, alas, that great City, that was clothed in fine Linen, and Purple, and Scarlet, and decked with Gold, and precious Stones, and Pearls! For in one Hour so great Riches is come to nought.*

16. And crying out, with bitter Astonishment and Condolance, will say, Alas! Alas! How tremendous is the Destruction of *Rome*, that great and famous City, where the Head of the Papacy, who *said in her Heart I sit a Queen, and shall see no Sorrow*, (ver. 7.) had her imperial Seat; and in the Height of her Pomp, Power and Riches, was sumptuously arrayed in fine Linen and Purple and Scarlet, and set off with the glittering Ornaments of Gold, and all Manner of precious Stones, and Pearls! Her Case is extremely deplorable: For all on a sudden, as though it were in one unexpected and unthought-of Hour, she is divested of all her rich Treasures, and reduced to the utmost Poverty and Distress.

17 *And every Ship-master, and all the Company in Ships,*

17. And the lower Ranks of her Officers, that were devoted to her Service, and retailed her Pardons, and Indulgences, and other Trumpery, and compassed Sea and Land

... Sailors, and as many as trade by Sea, stood afar off,

to make Proselytes, such as Priests, Monks, Friars and Jesuits, who got their Living by this Trade, and may be represented, in Allusion to the Lamenters of *Tyre*'s Ruin, (*Ezek.* xxvii. 29—33.) under the Emblem of Masters of Ships, and all their Ship-mates and Mariners, and all Trafficers in them by Sea: All these as unable, as the Kings and Merchants, (*ver.* 9, 11.) to help her, shall likewise get out of the Reach of her Calamities, as far as they can, for fear of sharing in her Punishments, as they had in her Crimes and Gains.

18 *And cried, when they saw the Smoke of her Burning, saying, What* City is *like unto this great City!*

18. And when they see the dismal Tokens of her utter Destruction, like the thick and gloomy Columns of Smoke, that rise from every Part of a City all in Flames, (See the Note on *ver.* 9.) They shall cry out with Amazement, Lamentation and Horror, saying, as was said of *Tyre*, (Ezek. xxvii. 32.) What City so grand and magnificent, wealthy, powerful and proud, was ever so intirely and speedily involved in Misery and Ruin, as this great City, together with her vast Dominion, is, beyond all that could have been imagined!

19 *And they cast Dust on their Heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great City, wherein were made rich all that had Ships in the Sea, by reason of her Costliness! for in one Hour is she made desolate.*

19. And as great Mourners have used, in their Distress, to throw Dust upon their Heads, (*Josh.* vii. 6, and *Job* ii. 12.) and the Bewailers of *Tyre* are represented by this Token; (*Ezek.* xxvii. 30.) So these Hucsters of *Rome*'s Wares will go into all Expressions of the deepest Sorrow, and cry out with Weeping and bitter Lamentation, Alas! Alas! for that great City, as mystical *Babylon* is often stiled in this Prophecy, and may also be well compared to *Tyre*, (See the Note on *ver.* 12.) How shocking are her Desolations and Miseries, who has been in such a flourishing State as to inrich all her Devotees that carried on Traffic with, and for her, in employing their Vessels at Sea to export her Pardons, Indulgences, *&c.* which were sold and purchased at costly Rates by her Authority! What a surprizing, sudden and miserable Change is now made upon her State and Condition! For she, as it were in one Hour, is reduced, and spoiled of all her former Wealth, Power and Grandeur; utterly incapable of any further helping her Servants, or of being helped by them.

20 *Rejoice over her, thou Heaven, and ye holy Apostles and Prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.*

20. But, said the Voice from Heaven, (*ver.* 4.) How much soever they, that trafficed and gained worldly Riches and Honours by her Influence and Authority, may sigh and mourn for her Desolation; it will be a just Occasion of great Joy and Gladness to the Saints, while they consider it, not as the Destruction of their *Fellow-Creatures*, but as the Day of their own happy Deliverance from the Oppressions of this Antichristian Enemy, and of God's glorifying himself in her righteous Overthrow, and in erecting the Glory of Christ's Kingdom on her Ruins: Triumph ye therefore over her, O Church of Christ, both in Heaven and on Earth, and all ye holy Apostles and Prophets, that have ministerially

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ally laid the Foundation, upon which the Church is built, *Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner Stone*; (Eph. ii. 20.) and be exceeding glad, O all ye faithful Pastors and Teachers, whom he has sent; and all ye Interpreters of his Word, whom he has raised up to preach and explain his pure Gospel, as his Witnesses who have prophesied in Sackcloth: *(Chap.* xi. 3.) For now God has awfully displayed his terrible Justice, and the Truth of his Predictions, *(Chap.* xvi.) in taking full Vengeance, for your Sakes, upon this corrupt and persecuting Power, which fain would have destroyed the Foundation of the Church itself, and all that are built upon it.

21 *And a mighty Angel took up a Stone like a great Milstone, and cast it into the Sea, saying, Thus with Violence shall that great City Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.*

21. And still further to confirm all this, as the Prophet *Jeremiah* was ordered to bind a Stone to the Book he had read, and cast it into the Midst of *Euphrates*, *saying*, *Thus shall* Babylon *sink, and shall not rise from the Evil that I will bring upon her*; (Jer. li. 63, 64.) So a glorious Angel, who excelled in Strength, took up, as he appeared in my Vision, a huge Stone in his Hand, like a great Milstone, and threw it with mighty Force into the Depth of the Sea, into which it suddenly sunk, never to rise again: And, to explain the Meaning of this emblematical Action, he said, After this violent Manner shall that great City, mystical *Babylon*, and all her Power, Authority and Magnificence, be suddenly cast into utter Destruction, and never shall be rebuilt, or recover Strength and Dominion, or have any Place in the World at all, from henceforth for ever.

22 *And the Voice of Harpers, and of Musicians, and of Pipers, and of Trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no Craftsman, of whatsoever Craft* he be, *shall be found any more in thee; and the Sound of a Milstone shall be heard no more at all in thee;*

22. And as to you, O mystical *Babylon*, according to what was threatened against apostate *Israel*, *(Jer.* xxv. 10.) All your Days of superstitious and civil Mirth and Pleasure shall come to a perpetual End: No Concerts of Players upon Harps and other musical Instruments; nor any Melody of Pipes and Trumpets shall ever be heard in your Churches, or in your merry Meetings any more; and all your spiritual Traffic and secular Trade and Business, together with all your Choiristers that adulterate the Worship of God; and all your cunning Artificers, and laborious Workmen, such as Carpenters and Smiths, *(Isa.* iii. 3, and *Jer.* xxiv. 1.) to serve the common Conveniences of Mankind, shall be taken away from you; and even the Necessaries of Life shall fail, insomuch that the Noise of a Milstone, to grind the Corn for Food and Sustenance, shall never more be heard in you.

23 *And the Light of a Candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the Voice of the Bridegroom and of the Bride shall be heard no more at all in thee. For thy Merchants were the great Men of*

23. And nothing comfortable of any Kind shall ever be enjoyed any more; No, not so much as the Light of a Candle, to relieve the horrid Darkness of the Night, shall ever be seen in you again; much less shall any bridal Lamp, or nuptial Songs, or Rejoicings of a Bridegroom over his Bride, or propagating of Families and Inheritances, be ever found any more in you: For your Dealers in spiritual Merchandise inriched themselves, and became the great and dignified Men of your earthly Empire, such as Cardinals and

 Prelates,

the Earth; for by thy Sorceries were all Nations deceived.

Prelates, by Means of the iniquitous Trade, which they carried on to promote your Authority and Influence: For, by your bewitching Allurements, all Nations under your Dominion were imposed upon, and deluded into an Admiration of, and Compliance with your Superstition and Idolatry.

24 *And in her was found the Blood of Prophets, and of Saints, and of all that was slain upon the Earth.*

24. And, what greatly adds to all these Provocations of mystical *Babylon*, and aggravates her Crimes, Condemnation and Misery, and aloud proclaims the Righteousness of God's Judgments upon her, is, that she has filled up the Measure of the Cruelties and Murders, which have been practised upon the faithful ministring Servants and holy People of God, and upon all that by her Authority, Canons and Decrees, have ever been put to Death for Righteousness-Sake, throughout her Territories, and to the utmost Extent of her Influence upon Earth, as by her Persecutions she has approved of, imitated and exceeded all that were ever known before; and so the Blood of all Martyrs for Christ is found in her Skirts, and, by just Construction, is chargeable upon her: (See *Matth.* xxiii. 29—35.) And therefore God *has given her Blood to drink; for she is Worthy.* (Chap. xvi. 6.)

Recollections.

How certain, sudden and irrecoverable will be the Destruction of the Seat of the Beast at *Rome*, and of the whole Papal Power with her! She is the mystical *Babylon*, whose Fall, as it were in one Hour, was pronounced by an illustrious Angel, and further confirmed by the Emblem of a vast Stone plunged with Violence into the Sea, from whence it never can rise again. How dreadful and total will her Ruin be! She who flourished in Pomp, Luxury and Plenty, and thought she sat as a Queen and should see no Sorrow, shall become desolate, like a horrid uninhabited Wilderness, haunted by Demons, and doleful Birds, and savage Beasts. All her Pride, Riches and Luxury shall be turned into Shame, Want and Misery; all her Joy into Mourning; and all her Pleasure into Torment. She shall be stript of all her Greatness and sumptuous Ornaments, and cut off from all the Comforts, Conveniences and Necessaries of Life; and all Ranks of People under her Dominion shall be reduced to the utmost Poverty and Distress; and she shall be repaid with the heaviest Vengeance from God for all the Wrath, that she had reek'd upon his faithful Servants and People. The Tokens of her Torment shall be as visible and affecting, as the thick and fiery Smoke that ascends from the Ruins of a City all in Flames: And when her Friends that had supported her, and had been profited, to a greater or less Degree, in temporal Concerns, by the Sale of her Indulgences and Pardons, and other spiritual Commodities, by which she deceived the Nations, and drew them into Superstition and Idolatry; when these shall see her sudden, miserable and utter Desolation, they shall be astonished, and bitterly lament over her, as unable to help her, or to be helped by her any more; and shall strive to get as far as they can out of the Way of God's Judgments upon her, lest they should be swallowed up in her Calamities, as they had been Partakers of her Sins. And O how righteously will these Judgments be executed upon her, whose enormous and multiplied Iniquities are heap'd up, as it were, to Heaven, and cry aloud for Vengeance to come down upon her! Her Superstition, Lewdness and Idolatry, Luxury and Haughtiness, Cruelty and Persecution of the Saints and Servants of Christ; her Merchandise of the Souls, as well as Bodies of Men, to their Destruction; her Allurements of Kings and Nations to forsake God, and join themselves to Idols, shall all be remembred in his Wrath, to her everlasting Confusion. With what Abhorrence should all the People of God separate from her Communion, lest they partake of her Sins, and of her Punishments! And how should they rejoice and triumph, in Reflection that the Time is coming, when God will vindicate his righteous Cause, and avenge them, in her just Destruction, and will deliver them from all her Molestations for ever!

CHAP. XIX.

The Church both in Heaven and on Earth triumph, and praise the Lord for his righteous Judgments upon the great Whore of Babylon, *and for the Honour of their own Espousal to Christ,* 1—8. *An Angel pronounces them blessed, and refuses the Worship which* John *offered him,* 9, 10. *Then follows another Vision of Christ, as going forth on a white Horse at the Head of his Army, which is also mounted on white Horses, to make War against the Beast and his Armies, which are utterly and miserably destroy'd,* 11—21.

TEXT.

1 *AND after these Things I heard a great Voice of much People in Heaven, saying, Alleluia: Salvation, and Glory, and Honour, and Power unto the Lord our God:*

PARAPHRASE.

1. AND after the preceding Visions of the total Ruin of the great Whore of *Babylon*, in the Downfal of the papal chief City and Empire, methought, I heard an exceeding loud and joyful Acclamation of the heavenly Church, saying, in Obedience to the Order, (*Chap.* xviii. 20.) *Hallelujah, Praise ye the Lord*; We applaud, and call upon all the Saints on Earth to join with us in blessing, the Lord our God for the Happiness of his People, in their complete Deliverance from the Corruptions and Tyranny of the Antichristian-Church. The Glory, Honour and Power, which are conspicuous in all God's Works of Creation, Providence and Redemption, and particularly in this remarkably glorious Dispensation, ought to be ascribed, with the greatest Veneration and Cheerfulness, to his holy Name.

2 *For true and righteous are his Judgments: For he hath judged the great Whore, which did corrupt the Earth with her Fornication, and hath avenged the Blood of his Servants at her Hand.*

2. For he has faithfully fulfilled his Promises to his People, as well as proved himself to be true to his Threatnings against his and their Enemies; and has acted a most righteous Part in the Punishment he has denounced against, and inflicted upon them: For he has condemned, and executed Judgment upon Antichristian-*Rome*, (which may be compared to a great Strumpet) and upon all her Lovers, for the Iniquity of her Doings, and for their Compliance with her Allurements, who had spread idolatrous Fornication throughout her Territories on the Earth, and thereby corrupted the Religion and Manners of her Subjects: And now God has taken just Vengeance upon her for all the Blood of his Saints and ministring Servants, which she has unrighteously and cruelly caused to be shed, on account of their Faithfulness to him; and he has requited her, in Kind, according to her Deserts.

3 *And again they said, Alleluia. And her Smoke rose up for ever and ever.*

3. And they repeated their Hallelujahs, † beginning, carrying on and ending their Song, with joyous and triumphant Thanksgivings and Praises, for the utter Dissolution of the idolatrous and persecuting Power of *Rome*. And the Perpetuity

† *Hallelujah* is a most lively and comprehensive Expression of *Praise*, often used, and translated *Praise ye the Lord*, in the *Psalms*; the five last of which, with several others, begin and end, as this heavenly Hymn

petuity and Misery of her Overthrow, never to revive any more, was represented by the Emblem of horrible Smoke from the unquenchable Fire that consumed her, as incessantly ascending from her Ruins to an endless Eternity.

4 *And the four and twenty Elders, and the four Beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the Throne, saying, Amen; Alleluja.*

4. Then the four and twenty Elders, and the four living Creatures, the Representatives of the Church, and of Gospel-Ministers, (See the Notes on *Chap.* iv. 4, 6.) prostrated themselves with the profoundest Reverence, and paid their Adorations and Praises to the great God, who appeared as seated on his imperial Throne, saying, We heartily join with the general Assembly (*ver.* 1.) in their Hymn of Praise for the Judgments, which thou hast executed upon this Antichristian-Power; and in Testimony of our high Approbation of, and Concurrence with, all the Ascriptions of Honour to thee on that important Occasion, we add our *Amen: Hallelujah*, praised be the Lord!

5 *And a Voice came out of the Throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his Servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.*

5. Soon after this I heard a Voice, which seemed to be uttered by a glorious Angel, and to come forth immediately from before the Throne of God in Heaven, * saying to the Church militant on Earth, Exalt, adore and bless the Name of our gracious God, who has faithfully performed his Promises to you, O all ye his true Worshippers, that love and serve him, and reverence and fear his holy Majesty, whether ye be of high or low Degree, or whatever be your Rank and Attainments of a religious or civil Nature.

6 *And I heard as it were the Voice of a great Multitude, and as the Voice of many Waters, and as the*

6. And, according to this divine Command, methought, I instantly heard an innumerable Company, even all *that feared the Lord both small and great*, joining with the utmost Alacrity in Acclamations of Joy and Praise, on Account of the glorious and happy State of the Church on

Hymn doth, with that Word: And several Expositors have thought that this being originally a *Hebrew* Word, retained in this Song of Praise, intimates that, upon the Destruction of *Rome*, which may probably be by Fire, (See the Note on *Chap.* xviii. 9.) the *Jews* shall be converted, who were prejudiced against Christianity, all along before, by the Idolatry and Persecutions of the Papacy; and that they are here called upon to join with the *Gentile*-Church in praising the Lord for this wonderful and intire Destruction of the Romish Antichristian-Power.

† *A Voice came out from the Throne*, is not here to be understood as the immediate Voice of *God* himself: For he could not properly say, *Praise our God all ye that fear him.* Nor do I apprehend it to have been the immediate Voice of *Christ*: For though he, as Man and Mediator, called his Disciples his *Brethren*, and sent a Message to them, saying, (*John* xx. 17, see the Paraphrase there) *I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God*; yet he there expressed his own, and their Relation to God distinctly in such a Manner, as reserved the Preheminence to himself. However, admitting that Christ, as the Head of the Church, might have called upon them, saying without any Impropriety, *Praise our God*; yet the Person, who uttered this Voice, seems to be the same, that ordered the Apostle *John* to *write*, *Blessed are they which are called unto the Marriage Supper of the Lamb*, and that *refused the Worship* which *John* offered to pay him, under some Mistake; (*ver.* 9, 10.) whereas our blessed Lord never refused religious Homage from any, (which was always his Due as *God*) even while he was in his State of Humiliation upon Earth; much less can it be supposed that he would refuse it in his State of Exaltation in Heaven. I therefore take this Voice to have been pronounced by a created Angel, who was near the Throne of God, and was probably, either the Angel, by whom Christ signified the Things, contained in this Prophecy, to his Servant *John*; (Chap. i. 1.) or the Angel who had *shewn unto him the Judgment of the great Whore*, (Chap. xvii. 1.)

Earth,

Voice of mighty Thunderings, saying, Alleluia: For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

Earth, consequent to the Overthrow and Punishment of all Antichristian-Powers; (*Chap.* xx. 1—6) and the Sound of their united Voices was, for Strength and Loudness, like the Noise of vast Cataracts of Water, or even the Roaring of the Sea, and the strongest Claps of Thunder, saying, *Hallelujah*; We exult and triumph, and call upon all others to praise the Lord: For now in a more eminent and glorious Manner, than ever before, the Almighty Jehovah, the ever living and true God *, to whose Empire the whole Creation is subject, manifests his great Power and Glory in his ruling over all; and has set up his Kingdom of Grace in our World with the greatest Majesty, Light and Liberty, Purity, Peace and extensive Dominion, to the Confusion of his Enemies, and the Joy of his Saints.

7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give Honour to him: For the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Wife hath made herself ready.

7. Let us now indulge a sacred Pleasure and Delight in him, and pay all Honour, Thanksgiving and Praise to him: For the happy Time is now come publicly and visibly to solemnize the Espousal of Christ to his Church, (2 *Cor.* xi. 2) whom he has redeemed to his Father, and purchased for himself, with his own precious Blood, as *the Lamb that was slain*; (Chap. v. 9, 12) and she being joined in a Marriage-Covenant with him, who *rejoices over her, as a Bridegroom over the Bride* †, (Isa. lxii. 5) is now cheerfully waiting in a prepared State and Frame to meet her Bridegroom, and enter into his Joy.

8 And to her was granted, that she should be arayed in fine Linen, clean and white: For the fine Linen is the Righteousness of Saints.

8. And that she might be suitably adorned for his Reception, it was graciously vouchsafed to her that, as grand Bridegrooms use to make Presents of rich Attire to their Brides of inferior Character, that they may make a becoming Appearance at the Celebration of their Nuptials; so she should be beautifully decked, at her Husband's Expence, with the most excellent Ornaments; which may be compared to the finest Linen that is spotless and bright, a lively Emblem of Honour, Favour and Acceptance, and of Purity and Holiness: For the fine Linen signifies (δικαιώματα) the Righteousnesses both of Justification by Faith in the Righteousness of Christ to intitle her to heavenly Bliss, and of Sanctification by his Spirit to make her meet for enjoying it; both of which are put upon all the Saints, like *Garments of Salvation*, the *Robe of Righteousness*, and the *Wedding Garment*. (Isa. lxi. 10, and Matth. xxii. 11, 12.)

9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are

9. Then the Angel, who had uttered the Voice from the heavenly Throne, (See the Note on *ver.* 5) applied himself

* *The Lord God omnipotent reigns* may be considered with relation to the *Father*, or to the *Son*, who is also *the mighty God*, (Isa. ix. 6) and I think is stiled *the Lord God Almighty*, Rev. xi. 17; (See the Note there.) Accordingly, the Kingdom here spoken of is *the Kingdom of the Lord and of his Christ* and is called *the Kingdom of our God, and the Power of his Christ*. Chap. xi. 15, and xii. 10.

† Dr. *More* and Mr. *Mede* suppose, that *the Marriage of the Lamb*, and his *Wife's being made ready*, refer to the Conversion of the *Jews*, who, being formerly invited to *the Marriage of the King's Son*, refused to come; but now, being ready and prepared, made haste to come.

they which are called unto the Marriage-Supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true Sayings of God.

directly to me, saying, In Consideration of what you have now heard, write down, for the standing Use of the Church under all Tribulations, that they, and they only, are substantially and securely blessed, and shall be so for ever, who are effectually called by divine Grace, and admitted to all spiritual Entertainments and Delights, which may be figured out by the Marriage-Feast, that the Lamb of God has made for his Bride. (*Luke* xiv. 15, 16.) And he, who talked with me, further said, This and all other Things revealed in your Visions are the infallible Truths of God, and shall certainly have a punctual Accomplishment in their Season according to his Word. (*Chap.* xxi. 5, and xxii. 6)

10 And I fell at his Feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it *not: I am thy Fellow-Servant, and of thy Brethren that have the Testimony of Jesus: Worship God: For the Testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy.*

10. Upon hearing these great and comfortable Things from the Angel, who appeared in such an illustrious and majestic Form, as seemed like that of the Angel of the Covenant, I, in a Transport of Admiration and Joy, prostrated myself at his Feet to pay him divine Honours, [illegible] the Son of God: But he hastily stop'd me short, and, co[illegible]ting my Mistake, said to me, in like Manner as the Apostles *Peter*, *Paul* and *Barnabas* did to those that offer'd them religious Worship, (*Acts* x. 25, 26, and [illegible]) Take heed what you do *: This Sort of Worship [illegible] not be paid to me, who, though a glorified Spirit, am not a [illegible] Person, but only one of your Fellow-Servants and Brethren in my present Employment, who am commission'd by the Lord Jesus to make known to you the Things that relate to his Person, Cause and Government, and to the Revolutions he will make in the Church and in the World as you also are to communicate them to others. (*Chap.* [illegible] 1, 2) Let all your religious Worship be reserved for, and paid only to God, to whom alone it is due; (*Matth.* iv. 10) and by no means to me: For the Testimony I have borne to Jesus, the Saviour, is dictated to me by the same Divine Spirit, who inspired the antient Prophets, and who by me now reveals to you the future Events contained in your Visions, that you may convey them to the Church for

* The *Worship*, which *John* offer'd to this glorious Angel, (See the Note on *ver.* 5) seems not to have been merely *civil Respect*, but of a *religious* Nature: For there was no Reason why the Angel should refuse to accept of *civil Respect*; and his ordering the Apostle to pay that very Sort of Worship to God, which he was about to offer him, (*Chap.* xxii. 9) was surely more than *civil Honour*, which is infinitely beneath God's Acceptance, and would be to put him upon a Level with some exalted Creature.—It may indeed seem strange that the Apostle *John* should, after this Rebuke, so far forget himself, as to attempt such an idolatrous Act a *second* Time, as in *Chap.* xxii. 8. But it is to be consider'd that as *Peter* in the Mount of Transfiguration was in such an Extacy of awful Wonder and Joy, that *he knew not what to say*; (Mark ix. 6) so the Apostle *John* was in such a Transport and [illegible] as might not admit of calm and deliberate Reflection, some Time after the former Rebuke, wh[illegible] not quite so strong and decisive as that which followed; and this might precipitate him into the [illegible], as it had into the *first* Mistake. And if here was a Neglect of due Consideration, he might be suffer'd to fall into the same Error again, to shew what Imperfection attends the best of Men in this World; and to give an Opportunity for the more remarkably fixing the eternal Rule of all religious Worship at the Close of the Canon of the New Testament; as also for the more strongly condemning [illegible] Worship of Saints and Angels, and guarding the People of God against it, which the Spirit of [illegible] foresaw would notoriously prevail in the Antichristian-Church of *Rome*.

their Support and Comfort: And therefore religious Adoration is no more due from you to me, than from me to you; and so he rectified my Mistake.

11 *And I saw Heaven opened, and behold, a white Horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in Righteousness he doth judge and make War.*

11. In my next prophetic Vision, methought, I saw Heaven itself opened, from whence the Saviour came forth, with divine Majesty and Glory, to espouse the Cause of his People in the most effectual Manner against their Antichristian-Enemies; and, behold, a figurative Representation of a white Horse appeared to my View, such as Generals were wont to ride in solemn Triumphs; Which may be consider'd as an Emblem of the everlasting Gospel, that should prevail more extensively and successfully, than ever before, with Light and Purity, Speed and Power in its last Promulgation through the Earth: And he, who appeared as riding prosperously upon it to guide and govern its Course, was the Lord Christ, the Captain of Salvation, who is, ever was, and will be, and may justly be called, and in this glorious Dispensation will eminently appear to be, faithful and true to his Father, who appointed him, and to all those that put their Trust in him; faithful in performing his Promises to them, and true in executing his Threatnings upon his and their Adversaries: And his Procedure is with righteous Judgment in taking the Part of his Church against his and their Enemies, and in setting himself, as in Battle-Array, against all that oppose his Cause and Kingdom in the World.

12 [illegible] *were* [illegible] *of Fire,* [illegible] *his Head were* [illegible] *Crowns: And* [illegible] *a Name written that no Man knew but he himself.*

12. The Eyes of this august Person appeared to be as bright and penetrating, awful, terrible and burning, as a Flame of Fire; (*Chap.* i. 14) and on his Head was a Representation of many Crowns, set, as it were, one upon another, the Symbols of his natural and mediatorial Authority, and universal Dominion over the Church and the World, in all spiritual and temporal Concerns, and of his subduing all Nations and Things to himself: And he bore an adorable Name, which, as expressive of his divine Nature and Perfections, and of his Dignity and Authority, as *the Word made Flesh*, (John i. 1, 14) was so wonderful, (*Isa.* ix. 6) that, like the Name *Jehovah*, no mere Creature knew any thing of it, till it was revealed; and even then it was so incomprehensible by any of them, that none but himself, to the Exclusion of all Creatures, could fully understand the deep Mysteries contained in it. (See *Matth.* xi. 27.)

13 [illegible] *was* [illegible] *with a Vesture* [illegible] *Blood: And* [illegible] *called,* [illegible]

13. He was further represented to me, like a mighty and victorious General, as wearing a Garment all over stain'd with the Blood of his vanquish'd and slaughter'd Enemies, over whom he was to gain a complete Conquest in his State of Exaltation, as the Reward of his Obedience and Sufferings unto Death, when his Raiment was dyed with his own Blood in his State of Humiliation: And one of the glorious Names that properly belongs to him, and he is known by in the Church, according to divine Revelation, (*Chap.* i. 2, 9,

 and

and *John* i. 1, 14) is the eternally eſſential and perſonal, who in due Time became the declarative and executive *Word of God.*

14 And the Armies which were in Heaven followed him upon white Horſes, clothed in fine Linen, white and clean.

14. And his Armies, conſiſting not merely of the heavenly Hoſt of Angels, who as miniſtring Spirits attend him, but chiefly, if not wholly, of his miniſtring Servants and faithful People, who are born from above, have their Citizenſhip in Heaven, and are joined in Communion with *the general Aſſembly and Church of the Firſt-born, whoſe Names are written in Heaven:* Theſe, like a numerous and well-diſciplin'd Army of *the Called, Choſen and Faithful,* (Chap. xvii. 14) who had liſted as Volunteers under his Banner, and were headed and animated by him, appeared as marching after their glorious Leader with exceeding Pomp and Splendor, to make up his magnificent Train, as mounted, like himſelf, upon white Horſes, the Emblem of Goſpel-Truth and Purity, Joy and Victory; and they ſeemed to be richly array'd with fine Linen, bright and pure, an Emblem of *the Robe of Righteouſneſs* and *Garment of Salvation,* which, as has been ſaid, (*ver.* 8) ſignify *the Righteouſneſſes of the Saints.* The Meaning of all which may be conſidered as pointing to ſuch a State of Peace and Triumph, and of Dignity and [illegible] like Kings and Prieſts unto God, that the Church of Chriſt on Earth ſhould now be advanced to, as bears a near Reſemblance of what is enjoy'd in Heaven.

15 And out of his Mouth goeth a ſharp Sword, that with it he ſhou'd ſmite the Nations: And he ſhall rule them with a Rod of Iron: And he treadeth the Wine-preſs of the Fierceneſs and Wrath of Almighty God.

15. And to aſſure me that the Captain of Salvation would obtain his Victories, not by any Power of his Followers, as of themſelves, but intirely by his own Power, as exerted either immediately, or mediately by them, I ſaw the Appearance of a ſharp Sword proceeding out of his Mouth, an Emblem of his dreadful Threatnings and of his having the Power of the Sword, which he would uſe according to his Word, in taking righteous Vengeance on the idolatrous, perſecuting and ſinful Nations, and would rule over them by his Authority and Power, as *with an Iron Scepter,* and *daſh them in Pieces like a Potter's Veſſel:* (Pſ. ii. 9.) And as, their Iniquity being full, they were thoroughly fitted for Deſtruction, like Cluſters of Grapes fully ripe to be trodden and ſqueezed in a Wine-preſs; ſo he would *tread them in his Anger, and trample them in his Fury,* (Iſa. lxiii. 3) and thereby cruſh them to Death by terrible Impreſſions of the heavieſt Wrath, which is no leſs than *that* of God Almighty, whoſe Power is infinite and irreſiſtible; and none *can ſtand before his Indignation, or abide in the Fierceneſs of his Anger.* (Nah. i. 6.)

16 And he hath on his Veſture, and on his Thigh a Name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

16. And this victorious Avenger of his Church upon his and their Enemies was further repreſented, as having an Inſcription of another of his diſtinguiſhing Titles, like a *Motto* wrote upon his upper Raiment, and particularly on that Part of it which cover'd his Thigh, the Place where the Sword uſually hangs in order to its being drawn, (*Pſ.* xlv. 3) and

where

where it might be visible to all around him, importing, that he is, and by his mighty Acts soon would effectually prove himself to be, by way of Eminence, the sovereign Lord and Ruler of all the Potentates, Princes and Nobles of the Earth (far beyond what the vain-glorious Monarchs of the *East* could claim) to govern, influence or restrain, save or destroy them; and to do his Will, and work by and upon them, as seems best in his Sight.

17 And I saw an Angel standing in the Sun; and he cried with a loud Voice, saying to all the Fowls that fly in the midst of Heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the Supper of the great God;

17. And, the more deeply to impress me with a Sense of the dreadful, extensive and complete Devastation he would make upon all his Antichristian-Enemies, I beheld an Angel as illustrious and conspicuous to the whole World, as if he stood in the midst of the Sun to be seen of all: And, with a Voice strong and loud enough to be heard far and wide, he summoned all the ravenous Birds that fly in the Region of the Air, saying, in Allusion to a Day of general Slaughter, in which the dead Bodies of the Slain are exposed to be devoured by those voracious Animals, Come, and gather yourselves together, to eat the Carcases of those that fall in Battle; which the *King of Kings and Lord of Lords*, (ver. 16) who is *the great God*, (Tit. ii. 13) has prepared for you to feast upon, as in a Field all over covered with the dead Bodies of vanquished and slaughter'd Armies; Which may be considered as Christ's Call to his People on Earth, by a commission'd Angel, to rejoice and triumph over them, like his Guests, invited to feast on the Sacrifice, which he would make to his Wrath and Justice, for their actual Deliverance from the Power of those that hated and oppressed them.

18 That ye may eat the Flesh of Kings, and the Flesh of Captains, and the Flesh of mighty Men, and the Flesh of Horses, and of them that sit on them, and the Flesh of all Men, both free and bond, both small and great.

18. Come ye all hither, that, to allude to an antient Prophecy, (*Ezek.* xxxix. 17—21) ye may regale yourselves, and feed to the full on the Carcases of the wicked Kings of the Earth, and particularly of the *Roman* Popish Empire; and of the Commanders of Armies, and of Men of mighty Valour; and may feast upon the Flesh of War-Horses and their Riders; and upon the Flesh of all Ranks and Orders of Men, which had taken the Part, and joined in the Cause of Antichrist, whether they be Masters or Servants and Slaves, high or low, who shall universally fall a Prey to you, like dead Bodies on the Field of Battle; Which may be considered as a strong figurative Representation of the Saints rejoicing to divide the Spoil, which will fall to them by the total and ignominious Destruction of all their Enemies, as a just Retaliation for their having slain Christ's Witnesses, and not suffered their dead Bodies to be put in Graves, but rejoiced over them in their calamitous Circumstances. (*Chap.* xi, 7—10.)

19 And I saw the Beast, and the Kings of the Earth, and their Armies gathered to-

19. Then, after this Summons to feast upon the Slain, methought, I saw the Antichristian-Beast, which represented *Rome* papal, as a persecuting Power, in Conjunction with the Princes and Potentates of the Earth that supported it,

gether to make War against him that sat on the Horse, and against his Army.

and the whole *Posse* of Forces, consisting of all the Wicked and Ungodly, whether *Papists*, *Mahometans*, or *Pagans*, even all that they could muster, assembled together to engage in a vigorous and war-like Opposition against the *King of Kings and Lord of Lords* (who appeared as sitting on *a white Horse*, ver. 11, 16) to subvert his Gospel and Kingdom; and against his Army of faithful Servants to destroy them that followed him, as their Captain and Leader.

20 And the Beast was taken, and with him the false Prophet that wrought Miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the Mark of the Beast, and them that worshipped his Image. These both were cast alive into a Lake of Fire burning with Brimstone.

20. And the Issue of this Battle was, that the Antichristian persecuting Power, which under one figurative View has been represented as *the Beast*, and under another, as *the false Prophet*, (Chap. xvi. 13) who pretended to work Miracles in the Sight, and under the Protection of the Beast, and by his lying Wonders imposed upon, and deluded the Nations that had openly professed Subjection to the Beast, and, in Token of it, wore its Mark, (See the Note on *Chap.* xiii. 16) and paid idola rous Worship to him, and to the Images which he had set up as Objects of religious Adoration. Both these idolatrous and persecuting Powers, which may be differently conceived of in their *civil* and *ecclesiastical* Capacities, (*Chap.* xvi. 13) [illegible] Captives into the Conqueror's Hands: And as [illegible] of rebellious Armies, when subdued and taken Prisoners, use to be most exemplarily punished; so these who were the Ring-leaders in the general Apostacy and severe Persecutions, and in this War against Christ and his People and Cause, were grievously tormented, like Persons cast alive into an Abyss of Fire, burning, like *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, with an intense and everlasting Flame, as though mixed with Brimstone to feed and maintain it with the fiercest Rage, that it never might be quenched. (*Mark* ix. 43—48.)

21 And the Remnant were slain with the Sword of him that sat upon the Horse, which Sword *proceeded out of his Mouth: And all the Fowls were filled with their Flesh.*

21. And the rest of the Armies, who, like common Soldiers, fought against Christ and his Church, under the Command and Influence of these wicked Leaders, were intirely vanquished and exposed to Shame, like Enemies slain and left unburied in a Field of Battle, by the glorious Conqueror who sat upon the white Horse, (*ver.* 11) even by the sharp Sword, which was represented as proceeding out of his Mouth, (*ver.* 15) to intimate their being *destroy'd by the Spirit of his Mouth, and the Brightness of his Coming:* (2 Thess. ii. 8, *&c.*) And, according to the Summons given before, (*ver.* 17, 18) all the Birds of Prey fed upon their slain Carcases, and were fully satiated with their Flesh; Which may signify the Satisfaction that the Church of Christ will have in the utter Destruction of the whole Power of his and their Enemies, as the Glory of God will be thereby manifested, and a Way opened for the happiest and most glorious State of Christ's Kingdom on Earth, then at Hand to take Place.

RECOL-

RECOLLECTIONS.

O with what Rapturous Hallelujahs will the Church-militant on Earth join the Chorus of the Church-triumphant in Heaven, when righteous Judgment shall be executed upon all the Powers of Popery, and their confederate Kings and Nations through the World, and when the public Marriage of the Lamb shall come! They will then ascribe Salvation, Glory, Honour and Power with joyful Triumph to the Father and Son, either of which may be considered in their Song of Praise, as the Lord their God, even the Lord God Omnipotent, whose Kingdom rules over all, as will then be uncontroulably evident; and who, in Distinction from Angels and all mere Creatures, is the only Object of religious Adoration. O happy Souls, that shall be called to the Marriage-supper of the Lamb, and be presented to him in Robes of illustrious and spotless Righteousness, as a Bride richly adorned, and fully prepared for her Husband! How glorious will our Lord Jesus appear, when he shall come forth, as riding on a white Horse, the Symbol of Victory, Joy and Triumph, to espouse the Cause of his People, and take Vengeance on the combined Armies of his Enemies that rose up in a rebellious War against him; and when all his true Followers, as beautifully mounted and arrayed, shall march after him, as his pompous Train, and Sharers in the happy Fruits of his Conquests, which they also obtain through him! He will then be known to be the essential and declarative Word of God, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords; Titles so divinely great, as can belong to none but God.—Faithfulness, Truth and Righteousness run through all his Dispensations; his penetrating Wisdom and universal Dominion, his just Indignation, and awful Government and Executions will then be eminently manifested by Flames of Fire darting from his Eyes, by many Crowns on his Head, by a sharp Sword proceeding out of his Mouth, by his Raiment sprinkled with the Blood of his Adversaries, and by his ruling them with a Rod of Iron, and treading them, as ripe for Destruction, in the Wine-press of the fierce Wrath of God Almighty.—Ah! dismal Havoc, that will then be made upon all the Enemies of Truth and Righteousness, of what Rank or Degree soever, like Carcases slain and left unburied on a Field of Battle! The Beast and the false Prophet, all the tyrannical and idolatrous Powers of the Papacy, shall be exemplary punished, like the chief Leaders of a Rebellion, that are thrown alive into a sulphureous Lake of unquenchable Fire; and their whole Army shall miserably perish. Then all the Saints shall be summoned to seize the Spoils of War, to their full Satisfaction, like the Fowls of the Air that feast upon the dead Bodies of Men, as their Prey. Praise the Lord, O all ye his Servants that fear him, small and great. For all these are the true Sayings of God, testified by the Spirit of Prophecy to an Angel, and to an Apostle, who are only fellow Servants and Brethren in ministring them to us, for our Support and Comfort under all present Tribulations, which shall certainly end in a glorious State of Peace, Purity and all Prosperity to the Church. *Hallelujah!*

CHAP. XX.

An Angel descends from Heaven, who binds and shuts up Satan in the bottomless Pit for 1000 *Years, during which the Church reigns with Christ in a glorious State on Earth,* 1—6. *Satan is loosed again for a little while to deceive the Nations once more, and, gathering all his Forces together, makes his last Effort against Christ and his Church, which issues in their own final and irretrieveable Overthrow, and in the eternal Torment of the Devil, together with the Beast and the false Prophet,* 7—10. *Hereupon the general Judgment of the great Day is described, in which all the Dead are gathered before Christ on his Throne, the Books are opened, and they are judged; and all, that are not found written in the Book of Life, are cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, to be tormented for ever,* 11—15.

P E-

PERIOD. IV.

TEXT.

AND I saw an Angel come down from Heaven, having the Key of the bottomless Pit, and a great Chain in his Hand.

PARAPHRASE.

1. AFTER the foregoing Visions of the Destruction of the papal Power and all its Adherents, at the End of Twelve Hundred and sixty Years Reign of the Beast, methought, I saw a glorious Angel descend, as with a Commission from the Throne of God in Heaven, and as bearing two Emblems of divine Authority, which carried an Intimation of his being the Lord Jesus Christ himself, the Angel of God's Presence, who had been represented, as *having the Keys of Hell and Death*, and the *Key of* David *to shut and open* without Controul, and as *casting out the great Dragon*; (Chap. i. 18, and iii. 7, and xii. 7—9.) and who came to *destroy the Devil*, as well as *his Works*, (Heb. ii. 14, and 1 John iii. 8.) Accordingly the Emblems, with which he now appeared, were the Key of Hell, that horrible Abyss (αβυσσȣ) of Darkness, Misery and Despair, in one Hand, and a large strong Chain, for binding Criminals, in the other; to signify his irresistible Power to open the Gate of that bottomless Pit, and then shut and lock it fast upon those that are cast into it; and to bind up all the Force of the Devil and his Accomplices at Pleasure.

2 And he laid hold on the Dragon, that old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a Thousand Years,

2. Then, to execute his Commission, he, as seemed to me, arrested and seized upon the great Dragon, who had been described in a former Vision, (*Chap.* xii. 9.) as the *old Serpent*, whose Names, by which he is most commonly known, are *the Devil* and *Satan*; the first of which signifies a *Slanderer* or false Accuser; and the second, an *Adversary*, as this wicked Spirit most emphatically is, both of God and his People: And the Angel of his Presence restrained this Evil One from doing any Mischief, either by Seduction or Violence, for a very long Space of Time, * which may be called a Thousand Years, whether meant precisely of just so many, or indefinitely for a great Number of Years.

3 And cast him into the bottomless Pit, and shut him up, and set a Seal upon him, that he should deceive the

3. And the Angel threw him down into the great unfathomable Deep of Confinement, and Horror, (*Matth.* viii. 29, and *Luke* viii. 31.) and shut him up as a close Prisoner in Hell, as in a dark and dismal Dungeon; and kept him in safe Custody there, the Emblem of which was set-

* The Term *Thousand* is often used in prophetic Stile in an indefinite Sense, for a large and perfect Number, as in *Deut.* i. 11, and vii. 9, and xxxii. 30, *Ps.* xc. 4, and xci. 7, and cv. 8. *Eccles.* vi. 6, *Isa.* xxx. 17, and lx. 22, and 2 *Pet.* iii. 8. with several other Places; and it is left to the Readers Judgment to take it either in the *indefinite*, or the *strictly literal* Sense. But some have imagined (I think without sufficient Ground) that the 1000 Years are to be resolved into Days, and that each Day is to be taken for a Year, which would make the Duration of this Period about 365000 Years.

ting

Nations no more, till the Thousand Years should be fulfilled: and after that, he must be loosed a little Season.

ting a Seal over him, in Allusion to the Custom of securing Doors by a Seal, like what was set on the Stones that were laid at the Mouth of the Lion's Den, and of Christ's Sepulchre; (*Dan.* vi. 17, and *Matth.* xxvii. 66. See the Note there.) And all this was done to the End that the great Adversary, the Devil, might no longer, as in Times past, go *about like a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour*; (1 *Pet.* v. 8.) nor might delude and mislead the Nations of the Earth, as formerly, into Iniquity, Error and Persecution, till those Thousand Years (τα χιλια ετη) should be expired; and after *that*, (ver. 1, 8.) according to divine Appointment and Permission, his Restraint must be taken off for a very short Space of Time, compared with his former Dominion, and with the Thousand Years of his Confinement; the Issue of all which will be to his greater Confusion, and the Saviour's greater Glory.

4 *And I saw Thrones, and they sat upon them, and Judgement was given unto them: and* I saw *the Souls of them that were beheaded for the Witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not*

4. Upon the forementioned Deliverance of the Church of Christ from all Disturbance by the Efforts of Satan, I saw an Appearance of glorious Thrones, and of Persons seated with Honour and Dignity upon them, to whom the Authority of ruling over their Enemies, and exercising ecclesiastical and civil Jurisdiction was committed, and for whom righteous Judgment had, at length, been given against all those that had unjustly reproached, persecuted and oppressed them: And I beheld a Representation of the Souls * of those, who, as one Society with their Predecessors,

* *The Souls of them that were beheaded for the Witness of Jesus* may be considered as meant, not of the *individual Persons* that suffered Martyrdom for his Sake, but of their *Successors in the same Spirit*, who being of the same Temper, for Faith, Patience, Zeal and Fortitude, and professing the same Doctrines with the Martyrs, were one Body with them; and so in the Stile of Prophecy might be spoken of, as though they were the same Persons, in like Manner as *John the Baptist* is called *Elias*, because he came *in the Spirit and Power of* Elias, (*Matth.* xi. 14, and xvii. 12. compared with *Luke* i. 17.) and as *Rome*-Antichristian is in several Places of this Prophecy called *Sodom*, *Egypt*, and *Babylon*, on Account of its being like them in Idolatry, Pride, Luxury and Cruelty: and the *two Witnesses*, that were to prophecy in Sackcloth 1260 Days of Years, (*Chap.* xi. 3.) could not mean the same individual Persons, but a Succession of them that persisted in the same Faith and Profession: (See also the Note on 2 *Thess.* ii. 3.) When therefore it is said, *The Souls of them that were beheaded for the Witness of Jesus lived and reigned with Christ a Thousand Years*, this may be taken, according to prophetic Stile, in a metaphorical Sense, and may signify a Succession of such, in like Manner as the *two Witnesses* being *killed*, and their *dead Bodies rising and standing on their Feet*, is to be understood, *Chap.* xi. 7, 11; and as the Restoration of *Israel* from their Captivity is called their *living and standing on their Feet*, and God's *opening their Graves, and causing them to come out of their Graves*; (Ezek. xxxvii. 9, 10, 12.) and as the Conversion of the *Jews* in the last Days is spoken of, as *Life from the Dead*. (Rom. xi. 15.) Accordingly the Saints *living and reigning with Christ* may relate to their Abundance of Spirituality, Purity and Glory, Light, Love, and Joy, Tranquility and Safety, and to the Power of civil Magistracy as being in their Hands, and exercised with great Authority and Success, for suppressing all Iniquity and Prophaness, and promoting true Religion and Holiness in those happy Days.—I am not insensible that many learned and pious Men have put a *literal* Construction on this Prophecy, to denote a proper Resurrection of the dead Bodies of former Martyrs, and (as some of them think) of all other departed Saints; and they accordingly suppose that their dead Bodies shall be raised to life, and reign in a glorious Manner with Christ, as *personally* and *visibly* sitting on his Throne, for a Thousand Years upon Earth. But as I can scarce think that the corporal Presence of Christ will be removed for a Thousand Years from Heaven to this Earth; so a literal Resurrection of all the Bodies of the

worshipped the Beast, neither his Image, neither had received his Mark upon their Foreheads, or in their Hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand Years.

cessors, may be said to have suffered Martyrdom by being beheaded, or put to other cruel Deaths for the Sake of their faithful Testimony to Christ, as the only Saviour, and to the written Word of God, as the only Rule of Faith, Worship and Obedience; and who had maintained their Integrity with the Spirit, Faith and Patience of Martyrs, without submitting, through Fear of Tortures or Death, to the Authority of the Pope, or paying religious Homage to him, or to any Idols of his setting up; and had neither promoted nor owned the Power of the Antichristian Beast, as though they had been distinguished by bearing his Badge upon their Foreheads, or their Hands. (See the Note on *Chap.* xiii. 16.) And these, together with their Successors of the same Spirit, lived as a spiritual and political Body in a much happier State than ever before; and, the *Jews* being converted and the Fulness of the *Gentiles* brought in, they, who before had *suffered with Christ*, (Rom. viii. 17, and 2 Tim xi. 12.) now reign'd with him on Earth, under him, and by Virtue of his powerful Influence, and of their Relation to him, in a glorious State of Rest, Love and Peace, of Light, Liberty and Holiness, of Victory and Dominion over their Enemies, and of all Manner of Prosperity and Safety, during the forementioned Thousand Years, in which Satan was bound, and shut up in Prison, that neither he, nor his Instruments might deceive or annoy them.

5 *But the rest of the Dead lived not again until the Thou-*

5. But as to the rest who, in Contradistinction to these, had *worshipped the Beast*, &c. and were *the Remnant that were slain with the Sword of him that sat on the Horse*;

Saints is spoken of, as *in a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye at the last Trump*, in Order to their meeting the Lord in the Air and being with him, not on Earth, but *for ever* in Heaven. (1 *Cor.* xv. 52, and 1 *Thes.* iv. 16, 17.) And after the Expiration of this Thousand Years, and after Satan shall be loosed again for a little while at the End of them, we have an Account of the general Resurrection of all Persons, without any Exception, or the least Hint that the Martyrs, or any other Saints had rose so long a Time before, *ver.* 12, 13, of this Chapter. (See the Notes there) And as a proper Resurrection is never expressed in Scripture by the reviving or living again of *the Soul*, but only of *the Body*; so it seems extremely forced to understand the *living again of the immortal Souls* of them that were beheaded, as descriptive of a *literal Resurrection*; and a Resurrection of the Bodies of *glorified* Saints to live on Earth for a Thousand Years seems inconsistent with the sublimer Felicity and Honour, that their Souls were possessed of before in Heaven, and with their being liable to be deceiv'd, in case Satan had not been restrained, as also with the Trouble that must necessarily arise to them from the vigorous Opposition, which he and his Army would make against them at the Expiration of the Thousand Years, in which he was bound. It must likewise be an exceeding Débasement of their refined Dignity and Delight in the immediate Presence of Christ on his heavenly Throne, to exchange them for any Pleasures or Honours upon the Earth, especially if (as some *Millenaries* imagine) they are to be entertained with any sensitive Enjoyments. (See Dr. *Whitby* on the *Millenium*, and Mr. *Durham*'s Lectures, introductory to his Exposition of this Chapter) I therefore rather incline to think that, according to the Stile of Prophecy, and particularly in this Book, which is *figurative*, all this relates, not *literally* to the Resurrection of the Martyrs or other Saints, and the *personal* Reign of Christ for a Thousand Years on Earth; but *figuratively*, and in a spiritual Sense, for glorious Days of long Continuance to the Church on Earth, whether for the precise Number of a Thousand Years, or not. (See the Note on *ver.* 2.)

(Chap.

sand Years were finished. This is the first Resurrection.

(Chap. xix. 21) * they were so intirely subdued, that they lost all their Power and Authority, and had no Successors of the same wicked and active Spirit and Temper to survive them, till the Thousand Years of the Saints living and reigning with Christ were expired; and so, during this glorious Period, the Antichristian-persecuting Party will be reduced to a political Death, as the Witnesses prophesying in Sackcloth had been before: And then the Church of Christ will be so exceedingly happy and prosperous in all its temporal and spiritual Concerns, as may justly be esteemed, in a metaphorical Sense, a Resurrection from the Dead, as the Restoration of *Israel* from their Captivity, and the general Conversion of the *Jews* are described. (*Ezek.* xxxvii. 10, 12, and *Rom.* xi. 15.) This glorious State of the Church in the *Millenium* may well be called *the first Resurrection*, as it will precede, and may be considered as a *Figure* of the Resurrection of the Body afterwards unto eternal Life.

6 *Blessed and holy is he that hath Part in the first Resurrection: On such the second Death hath no Power, but they shall be Priests of God, and of Christ, and shall reign with him a Thousand Years.*

6. That Man is richly blessed of God, and effectually sanctified by his Spirit, that shall share in all the Honours and Delights of this *first Resurrection* to a State of Freedom from his former Troubles and Temptations, and of as complete Happiness and Conformity to the holy Image of Christ, as can be enjoy'd on Earth, and *that*, as a certain Pledge, Earnest and lively Foretaste of all Perfection in Heaven. Though such as these may die corporally as well as the Wicked, they shall not, like them, die eternally, or feel any of their Miseries *in the Lake that burns with Fire and Brimstone*; (Chap. xxi. 8) which may be called *the second Death*, as it comes after the Death of the Body: But they, in a Succession of them, shall be visibly consecrated to God the Father, and to his Son Jesus Christ, as a Kingdom of Priests, intirely devoted to their Service in the Beauties of Holiness, with Freedom and Delight; and, as has been said, (*ver.* 4) they shall be advanced to all civil and religious Dignity and Authority with Christ, in a due Subordination to him, their Lord and King, through the whole Duration of the Thousand Years of that most happy State of the Church on Earth.

PERIOD V.

7 *And when the Thousand Years are expired, Satan shall be*

7. And at the Expiration of the Thousand Years, in which the Saints shall triumph with Glory, and meet with no Disturbance from any of their Enemies, their grand Ad-

* "There is Mention (says Mr. *Lowman*) in this Prophecy, of two Sorts of dead Persons; those who were slain for the *Witness of Jesus*, and those that were slain by *the Sword of him that sat on the Horse*. As here is an Account of the Death of faithful Christians by their Persecutors, and of their Persecutors themselves by Christ, these Persecutors are called the *Remnant*, the *Rest*. (οἱ λοιποί).—— Thus the dead Church raised to Life, and living and reigning for a Thousand Years, and the Enemies of the Church remaining dead, and not living again till the Thousand Years were finished, will exactly agree in the same figurative Meaning, &c." (See the whole of his Note.)

loosed out of his Prison.

versary, the Devil, shall be again suffered to go forth for a little Season, as out of his Prison, in which he had been shut up; *(ver. 3)* and shall try his last and utmost Effort against them; their happy State on Earth not being perpetually to abide, as that of the heavenly State will.

8 *And shall go out to deceive the Nations which are in the four Quarters of the Earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to Battle: The Number of whom* is *as the Sand of the Sea.*

8. And Satan being released, by divine Permission, from the total Restraint that Christ had laid upon him for a Thousand Years, will then pursue his own malicious Temper and Designs, as he had done before, against Christ and his Church, by endeavouring, once more, to delude and draw after him People of various Nations, whether consisting of such formal Professors, as externally fell in with the Church, and durst not do otherwise, in the Years of its flourishing State, but were at Heart disaffected to the Purity of the Gospel and the Power of Godliness; or consisting of such, as, thro' Enmity or Fear, flew to as distant Countries as they could; even all secret and open Enemies to real Religion, wherever they were spread abroad toward the East, West, North, and South through the Earth: These, for their great Multitude, and for their wicked, envious, ambitious and oppressive Temper, and the utter Destruction which they at last will be brought to, † may *figuratively* be stiled *Gog* and *Magog*, who, as *Egypt* and *Babylon* had been before, were the last powerful and inveterate Adversaries to *Israel*, according to the prophetic Account of them. *(Ezek.* Chaps xxxviii. and xxxix.) All these will Satan practise upon, by his artful Insinuations, to assemble themselves together into one grand Army, and unite their Forces, by all Ways and Means possible, against the Church, to mar its Prosperity, and regain his lost Power over it; and they were such a prodigious Multitude, as, like the Sand of the Sea shore, is innumerable.

9 *And they went up on the Breadth of the Earth, and compassed the Camp of the Saints about, and the beloved City: And Fire came down from God out of Heaven, and devoured them.*

9. And I saw in my Vision, that this huge Host, with Satan at their Head as their Captain-General, spread themselves over the Face of the Earth, and particularly over the Breadth of *Immanuel*'s Land: *(Isa.* viii. 8.) And, to allude to the Encampments of *Israel* about the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, *(Numb.* ii. 2, *&c.)* they surrounded the Tents of God's peculiar and holy People, in the Midst of which his Tabernacle was set, that they might harrass and distress them: And, to allude to *Israel*'s Settlement afterwards at

* All the Guesses I have met with about the Signification of *Gog* and *Magog*, in an Application of it to any *particular* Nation, People or Party, upon Earth, or to the Wicked that were politically dead, and supposed to be now raised again, appear to me so very unsatisfying, fanciful and unlikely, that I have contented myself with such a general Account, as, according to the Stile of Prophecy, so familiarly used in this Book, may answer to the Character of *Gog* and *Magog*: For as, in this Book of Prophecy, the Antichristian-Powers were stiled *Egypt* and *Babylon*, (Chap. xi. 8, and xvi. 19, and xvii. 5) because they were antient oppressive Enemies to *Israel*; so the last Enemies to the true Church, after the Thousand Years of its Prosperity, before the second coming of Christ, may be stiled *Gog* and *Magog*, because they were the last powerful Enemies to *Israel*, after their Deliverance from Captivity, before his first coming, as appears from the 36th, 37th, 38th and 39th Chapters of *Ezekiel*.

Jerusalem,

Jerusalem, these bold Enemies encompassed the Church, which, like a City, was compacted together in beautiful Order, and which God had loved, and chosen and delighted to dwell in, that they might besiege and destroy it by their united Attacks upon it: And while they were engaged in this daring Attempt, the Fire of God's Wrath, like what he threatned to *Gog* and *Magog*, (Ezek. xxxviii. 22, and xxxix. 6) came down from Heaven, and utterly consumed them in the general Conflagration of the last Day, and in the eternal Fire that follows it; an Emblem of which had been given in the Overthrow of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, as God rained Fire and Brimstone from Heaven to destroy those wicked Cities. (*Jude*, ver. 7.)

10 *And the Devil that deceived them, was cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, where the Beast and the false Prophet* are, *and shall be tormented Day and Night for ever and ever.*

10. And the Devil himself, that grand Deceiver, who had influenced his Subjects to combine together, and set themselves in Battle-array against the Church, and had headed them in their Opposition to it, was thrown down from all his Dominion, and plunged into a deep and large Pit, which burn'd with the most dreadful Torture, as with unquenchable Fire and Brimstone; where the persecuting and idolatrous papal Powers, that had been represented under the Figures of the Beast and the false Prophet, were already suffering the due Reward of their abominable and complicated Iniquities: (*Chap.* xix. 20) And the Judgment of the great Day being then at hand, to which Satan was *reserved in everlasting Chains of Darkness*, (Jude, *ver.* 6) he shall be, not barely restrained, as he was before, for a Thousand Years; (*ver.* 2, 3) but shall be exquisitely tormented, together with those his chief Instruments, incessantly, without Relaxation or End, in the *everlasting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels*; (Matth. xxv. 41) which may be called *a Lake of Fire and Brimstone*, in Allusion to the sulphureous Lake, where *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* stood, when the Lord *rained Fire and Brimstone upon them* to destroy them. (*Gen.* xix. 24, 25.)

PERIOD VI.

11 *And I saw a great white Throne, and him that sat on it, from whose Face the Earth and the Heaven fled away, and there was found no Place for them.*

11. And for the Execution of divine Wrath upon these Ring-leaders in Wickedness, and upon all that lived and died under their Dominion, I further beheld a magnificent Throne of Judgment, awfully glorious and shining with illustrious Light, and spotless Purity, free from all Injustice; and saw the Lord Jesus, as Judge of the whole World, seated upon it, whose Appearance was so august, powerful and tremendous, that all Nature seemed to fly before him; and the former State of the Earth and of the elementary Heaven *passed away*; *which being set on fire were dissolved, and melted with fervent Heat*; in order to the Introduction of *the new Heavens and new Earth, wherein dwells Righteousness*: (2 Pet. iii. 10—13) The present Frame of Things so intirely vanished, that there was no Remainder of them.

12. And

12 *And I ſaw the Dead, ſmall and great, ſtand before God; and the Books were opened: And another Book was opened, which is* the Book *of Life: And the Dead were judged out of thoſe Things which were written in the Books, according to their Works.*

12. And I ſaw, in this Viſion, all the Dead, both righteous and wicked,* which were now raiſed from their Graves, whether they were high or low, rich or poor, Magiſtrates or Peaſants, older or younger Perſons, ſtanding in the immediate Preſence of Chriſt, to be judged by him, who is God, as well as Man, to whom *all Judgment is committed*; (John v. 22) And, to allude to the moſt accurate Modes of Proceſs in human Courts of Judicature, methought, I ſaw the Book of divine Omniſcience, in which are critically regiſter'd all the Thoughts, Words and Deeds of every one; and the Book of Conſcience which tallies to it; and the Books of the Law of Nature, and of the revealed Law and Goſpel, the only Rules of Judgment, (*Rom.* ii. 12—16) all opened, in order to this innumerable Multitude's being brought to their public and ſolemn Trial: And another Book of eternal Decrees of Love and Grace was opened, which contained the Names of all that were enrolled in Heaven for eternal Life, as thoſe whom the Father had given to the Son to be redeemed, ſanctified and ſaved by him, on which Account it may be ſtiled *the Lamb's Book of Life.* (Chap. xiii. 8, and xxi. 27) And all the Dead, being raiſed again, were tried, (together with thoſe then ali.. on Earth, (1 *Cor.* xv. 51, 52, and 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 15—17) and had a deciſive and final Sentence paſſed upon them, anſwerable to the Things that were recorded in thoſe Books reſpectively, according to the Evidence of, and in Proportion to, their ſeveral Works, whether good or bad, as they teſtified in Judgment for, or againſt their being real Chriſtians.

13 *And the Sea gave up the Dead which were in it; and Death and Hell delivered up the Dead which were in them: And they were judged*

13. And this final Judgment was ſo abſolutely univerſal, that not only they, that had been buried in the Earth, roſe out of their Graves; but they alſo, that had been ſunk and cover'd in the Waters of the great Deep, were raiſed by the omnipotent Command of him who ſat upon the Throne; (*ver.* 11) ſo that neither the Earth, nor the Sea, nor any Repoſitory whatſoever, could retain their Bodies under the Power of Death, but were forced to reſign them. † And

* This Deſcription of *the final Judgment* exactly correſponds to our Lord's own Repreſentation of the *univerſal Judgment*; (Chap. xxii. 12) *when he ſhall ſit on the Throne of his Glory, and all Nations ſhall be gathered before him*, at the ſame Time, for Judgment to paſs on the Righteous and the Wicked, according to the Proof that ſhall then be given of their different Characters; (*Matth.* xxv. 31—46) and, ſpeaking of that ſolemn Day, he ſaid, *Then he ſhall reward every Man according to his Works.* (Matth. xvi. 27.) The Apoſtle *Paul* alſo ſays, that *God will render to every Man according to his Deeds*; (Rom. ii. 6. See the Note there) and that *we muſt all appear before the Judgment Seat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the Things done in his Body according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad:* (2 Cor. v. 10, ſee alſo 2 Theſſ. i. 7—10.) It therefore is moſt natural to conſider *the Dead's ſtanding before God*, and *their being judged according to their Works* as meant, not barely of the Judgment of the *Wicked*, but of the univerſal Judgment of *all Mankind*; nor is it otherwiſe eaſy to conceive why *the Book of Life*, which the Wicked have no Share in, is here ſo particularly mentioned in the Proceſs of this Judgment.

† As the *Greek* Word (ᾅδης) commonly ſignifies *the State of ſeparate Spirits*, I have taken it uniformly in this Senſe, both here and in the next Verſe, where it ſeems to make a much eaſier Conſtruction of *Death and Hell* being *caſt into the Lake of Fire*, than any that I have met with.

every Man according to their Works.

the Souls of them that existed in a separate State, by Means of Death, were summoned to appear, together with their Bodies, before the great Judge of all; and could be no longer held in their State of Separation, which resigned them. And all these were impartially tried, and received Sentence according to the Kind, and in Proportion to the Degree of their respective Works, whether good or evil, as witnessing for or against them.

14 *And Death and Hell were cast into the Lake of Fire: This is the second Death.*

14. And from this Time forward, not only Death and the Grave lost all their Dominion; but the dead Bodies of the wicked, and their Souls that had before existed in a separate State, were, in Execution of the Sentence passed upon them, thrown with mighty Vengeance into the dreadful Abyss of unquenchable Fire, to be tormented there for ever with the Devil, and the Beast, and the false Prophet. (*ver.* 10. and See *Matth.* iii. 12, and *Mark.* ix. 43—48.) This may be called emphatically *the second Death*, as it comes after that of the Body, and is inexpressibly more terrible; and shall never end in a Resurrection to eternal Life.

15 *And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life, was cast into the Lake of Fire.*

15. And whosoever he were, that, upon the opening of the Books, and the critical and all searching Trial of that solemn Day according to them, was not found, by the produced Evidences, to have been written in the forementioned Book of Life, was immediately cast into the burning Lake to be tormented there for his evil Deeds, as with the Fire of divine Wrath which never shall be quenched. But the Righteous shall enter into Life eternal, as will be represented in the next Vision.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a glorious Time of Light, Liberty, Love and Peace, Purity, Joy and Triumph, shall the Church of true Believers enjoy upon Earth, after many Years of Darkness, Trouble and Oppression! The Lord Jesus will bind and shut up Satan, that old Serpent the Devil, as in Prison: The Cause of Truth and Holiness shall revive with great Power, Spirituality and Splendor: And they, who, with the Constancy, Patience and Spirit of Martyrs, had courageously renounced all Idolatry, Wickedness, and Error, and maintained a good Profession of Christ and of his Gospel in the worst of Times, shall, together with their Successors of the same Spirit, live and reign with him, under his Protection and Smiles, for a Thousand Years upon the Earth. And O with what Honour and Acceptance will they then appear, like royal Priests to him, and to God the Father through him! This will be a blessed Revival from their former low and distressed Circumstances, and be as Life from the Dead, before the Resurrection of the Body; and therefore may be figuratively called *the first Resurrection*; and they, that bear a Part in this, shall be secured from eternal Misery, which is *the second Death.* But how vain would it be to expect an everlasting Continuance of such a happy State on this Earth! At the Expiration of the Thousand Years, Satan will, in some Measure, be let loose again for a little while, and be permitted to go forth, once more, to deceive the Nations throughout the World, and gather all his numberless Forces together from among them, who may be compared to *Gog* and *Magog*, those last Enemies of *Israel*, to attack and disturb the Saints, the beloved City of the Lord. But, blessed be God, this regained Power and last Effort will be very short, and certainly end in the utter Destruction of the Devil, and all his Adherents, who shall be consumed by Fire from Heaven;

and

and cast into everlasting Flames with him: For Christ will set his Throne for Judgment, and the present Frame of the Earth and aerial Heaven shall be dissolved at his appearing. Then there shall be a general Resurrection of the Dead, wheresoever they were buried in the Earth or in the Sea; and the final Judgment of all Mankind will, upon Trial out of the Books which shall be opened, publicly and unalterably determine the eternal State of every one of them for inexpressible Happiness, or Misery, according to their respective Works, whether they be good or bad. Then all the Ungodly, whose Bodies were dead, and whose Souls had been in a separate State, and not found to be written in the Book of Life, shall, according to the just Sentence passed upon them for their evil Deeds, be cast into everlasting Burnings. But O the Happiness of the Righteous, as described in the following Chapter!

CHAP. XXI.

In Consequence of the final Judgment, the blessed State of the Church Triumphant is represented in general, under the Figures of a new Heaven and new Earth, and of the new Jerusalem, *where God dwells, banishes all Sorrow from his People, and makes them completely happy, in Opposition to the doleful State of the wicked,* 1—8. *And is more particularly described in its heavenly Original, Lustre and Glory, secure Defence and bright Ornaments, under the Figures of precious Stones, high Walls,* 12 *Gates, guarded by* 12 *Angels, and* 12 *Foundations inscribed with the Names of* 12 *Apostles,* 9—14. *In its beautiful Structure, under the Figure of an exceeding large City four Square, and consisting of the richest and finest Materials,* 15—21. *In its consummate Felicity, as irradiated with the immediate Presence of God and the Lamb, exclusive of all the Comforts of this World, which are figured out by the Light of the Sun and Moon,* 22, 23. *And in the free Access of vast Multitudes, of all Nations and Degrees, through the open Gates of this City, the Glory of which will swallow up all earthly Honours, and the Inhabitants of which are perfectly holy.* 24—27.

PERIOD. VII.

TEXT.	*PARAPHRASE.*
1 AND I saw a new Heaven, and a new	1. AFTER the preceding Visions, which ended in the final Judgment, another followed, in which I beheld the Blessedness of the Saints in Glory, * as figured

* Those Interpreters that are for the *personal* Reign of Christ *a Thousand Years upon Earth*, and some others with them, consider the Description given of the glorious State of the Church in this and the former Part of the next Chapter, as a large Comment upon what had been more briefly said in the preceding Chapter about the *Millenium*; and so confine it to the happy State of the Church's thousand Years Reign with Christ on Earth: And it must be owned that several Passages, especially taken by themselves, seem to have an Aspect that Way. But it appears to me that, viewing them in Connection with the Whole, they may fairly admit of a Construction, (as may be seen in their Places) very consistent with the heavenly Glory; and that there are other Expressions too high and strong to be applied to any State short of Heaven itself. As, for Instance, here the Saints *see the Face* of God and the Lamb, (*Chap.* xxii. 3, 4.) which the Scripture always represents as peculiar to the Heavenly-state; and their reigning here is said to be *for ever and ever*, (Chap. xxii. 5.) after the general Resurrection and Judgment, *Chap.* xx. 12, 13. in Opposition to their reigning

Earth: for the first Heaven and the first Earth were passed away; and there was no more Sea.

red out, like the State of the *New Testament*-Church (*Isa.* lxv. 17. and lxvi. 22.) by a new Heaven and new Earth; which may be so called with respect to their Form and Qualities, signifying an intirely new Fabric, as Emblems of the new State of Happiness that will then be introduced: For the former elementary Heaven and this Earth, not with respect to their Substance, as though they were to be annihilated; but with respect to their Frame and Use, which are suited to the Accommodation of its present Inhabitants, and yet become noxious by Reason of the Fall of Man, were dissolved: And I observed, that in this new and most excellent Structure there was no *Sea*, as there is in this terraqueous Globe; Which might intimate that, in this new blissful State, there shall be no tumultuous Passions, like *the troubled Sea*; (Isa. lvii. 20.) nor any mischievous Enemies to disturb the Peace of its Inhabitants, like *the Beast that rose out of the Sea*, (Chap. xiii. 1.) or *the great Whore that sat on many Waters*; (Chap. xvii. 1.) and so there shall *be no Calamity* of any Kind.

2 *And I John saw the holy City, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband.*

2. And I *John* who had all these Visions, and have faithfully recorded them, saw the Church of Christ shining in her brightest Glory; which was represented to me under the Figure of the City of the Lord, as made perfect in Holiness, even the *heavenly*, which may be stiled the *new*, *Jerusalem*, on Account of its Excellency, and in contradistinction to the antient and beloved City of that Name upon Earth; this being a *City that has Foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God*; (Heb. xi. 10.) a Plan of which was exhibited to my View, as descending from God's Throne out of Heaven toward me, to give me an Opportunity of the more distinctly and critically observing it; * and to assure me that its Original is from Heaven,

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reigning a *Thousand Years on Earth*, after the *first Resurrection*; and it is not said of them that they shall not die, only that the SECOND DEATH *has no Power on them* (Chap. xx. 4, 6.) But it is said of this blessed State, *There shall be no more Death* (Chap. xxi. 4.) Other Particulars of like Sort will appear in the Exposition. (See also *Durham*'s first Lecture on the Place.) And as it might justly be thought strange, that a Prophecy, which is all along designed for the Support, Encouragement and Comfort of the Church under all present Tribulations, should give us no View of the final, complete and everlasting Happiness of all true Believers, and suffering Saints, in Heaven; so it looks like perplexing and subverting the orderly Progress of the Prophecy to suppose, that after an Account of *the general Judgment*, and *the Misery of the Wicked* at the Close of the last Chapter, no Notice should be taken of the *heavenly Blessedness* of the Righteous; but that, instead thereof, our Thoughts should be carried back again to the *Millenium* which preceded them. Upon the whole therefore, I am most inclined to think with others, that the regular Series of the Prophecy requires that, after it had led us to the universal Judgment, and the Punishment of the Damned, (*Chap.* xx. 11—15.) it should of Course go on to the State of the Church triumphant in Heaven, as the crowning Part of its noble Design for raisiing the Hopes and Joys of Believers under all present Trials and Afflictions; (Vid. *Pol. Synops.* and our Note on 2 *Pet.* iii. 13.) Or that, if it be supposed to have any Relation to the *Millenium*, it is only to what will then be fulfilled *in Part*, as a lively Figure of what will be *much more gloriously* completed in the heavenly State.

* Though *the holy City, the new Jerusalem*, is represented as *coming from God out of Heaven*, here, and in *ver.* 10, This may relate to its *Draught* or *Model's* visibly descending from thence to the

Heaven, that no such City was ever on Earth, and that all its Glory shall be perfected in Heaven. It made a most beautiful and delightful Appearance, which may be compared to that of an amiable Bride, richly adorned and quite ready to meet her Bridegroom on the Day of solemnizing their Marriage; this holy City being an Emblem of the Church, which is espoused to Christ, and shall then appear in Robes of Righteousness and of immortal Light and Honour, and be *presented faultless before the Presence of his Glory* with exceeding Joy. (*Jud.* ver. 24.)

3 *And I heard a great Voice out of Heaven, saying, Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with Men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his People, and God himself shall be with them,* and be *their God.*

3 And the Meaning of this Vision was explained by a loud articulate Voice, which I heard, as coming out from Heaven, saying, in Allusion to the *Shechinah*, which appeared in the Tabernacle, as an illustrious Token of the divine Presence among the *Israelites*, Behold, God has fixed his most glorious Residence in the Midst of his heavenly Church, which consists of the whole Number of his chosen, redeemed and called from among Men of all Nations: And he will henceforth dwell perpetually in the most immediate Manner with them, and they shall be owned and honoured by him as his peculiar People, and the great God himself will intimately commune with them; and suitable to the near Relation into which he has taken them, as their Covenant-God and Father, will make up a complete Portion of all possible Happiness to them in the full Enjoyment of himself for ever and ever. (*Chap.* xxii 5.)

4 *And God shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes; and there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor Crying, neither shall there be any more Pain: for the former Things are passed away.*

4. And in this State of heavenly Bliss, God, by his immediate Presence, will not only relieve their Sorrows, but intirely remove them, that they may never have the least Occasion to weep, or ever shed a Tear, as formerly, on any Account whatsoever; and there shall be no more Mortality or Liableness to Death, as there was while they lived in the lower World; nor shall there be any Thing of a grievous Nature to afflict them; nor any Outcry (κραυγὴ) by reason of Oppression, Frights or Fears; nor shall there be any more Pain or Sickness of Body, or Anguish of Spirit, which they were subject to while they dwelt in mortal Flesh: For all defective and uncomfortable Things, and Sin, the Root and Cause of them all, are in that glorious State absolutely and eternally banished to the remotest Distance from them: They are all over and gone, never to return, that nothing may ever interrupt or abate their consummate Happiness; which is more than can be said of any Condition on this side Heaven. (See the Notes on ver. 1. and *Chap.* xx. 4.)

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the Apostle *John*, that he might distinctly view it, as the *Sheet* did to *Peter* in his Vision, (*Acts* x. 11.) rather than to *the Place*, where the City itself should be. And the same Manner of Expression follows with relation to the *great Voice out of Heaven*, which our Apostle *heard*, ver. 3. (ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ) However the *heavenly State* itself is expressed by the very same Phrase, *Chap.* iii. 12, and is called *our House, which is from Heaven*, 2 *Cor.* v. 2. (ἐξ οὐρανοῦ.)

5. And

5 And he that sat upon the Throne, said, Behold, I make all Things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these Words are True and Faithful.

5. And as an additional Confirmation of all this, The blessed † God, who has been often represented in my Visions, as sitting upon the *Throne*, said, Behold with Admiration and Joy, I make an intire Change, by my Power and Grace, in the present State of all Things, and completely new-form all the happy and holy Inhabitants of the new World. And these are Matters of so high Importance for supporting and encouraging the Faith, Hope and Patience of the Church, under all its Tribulations on Earth, that he commanded me to record them in writing for their Comfort: For, said he, all these Declarations are infallibly true, and shall faithfully be performed to their eternal Joy.

6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give unto him that is athirst, of the Fountain of the Water of Life freely.

6. And, for their further Encouragement, he said to me, with respect to this wonderful Change, The Consummation of all Things is now come; all the Elect are gathered in, the whole Scheme of Providence and Redemption, and of my Love and Grace to them is completed; and all the Prophecies, contained in this and the foregoing Visions relating to their Sufferings and Glory, and to the Destruction of their Enemies, are now brought to their final Issue. To this he added concerning himself, in Allusion to the first and last Letters of the *Greek-Alphabet*, I am *Alpha* and *Omega*; the Author and Finisher both of the old and new Worlds, and of the Happiness of my People from first to last; and am unchangeably existent, eternally before, and after all these Dispensations. (See the Note on *Chap.* i. 8.) And whosoever is sensible of his Wants, and earnestly desirous of spiritual and heavenly Blessings, even unto eternal Life, like one that is vehemently athirst and longs for Refreshment; To him will I freely, of my own mere Favour, give abundant Satisfaction and Delight, to the utmost of his Wishes, in my immediate Presence; which may be compared to an everflowing and overflowing Fountain of Life and Consolation, whose perpetually springing Waters never fail.

7 He that overcometh shall inherit all Things: and I

7. He who, warring a good Warfare, with Faith and Patience, against Sin, Satan and his Instruments, and against all the Temptations of this present evil World, gains

† *He that sat upon the Throne* may possibly be meant of *Christ*: For I don't find that, in either of the foregoing or following Visions, God the Father is ever represented, as immediately speaking and giving orders to the Apostle; and Christ had appeared, as seated upon *a great white Throne* for Judgment, (*Chap.* xx. 11.) and might here call himself *Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End*, (ver. 6.) which in several Places of this Book are Titles, that, I think, he assumes to himself. (See the Notes on *Chap.* i. 4, 8.)—The Promise to *him that overcomes*, (ver. 7.) evidently agrees with, and is a Summary of, all his repeated Promises to *him that overcomes* in the 2d and 3d Chapters; and his adding here, I *will be his God and he shall be my Son*, may be said by him, as well as by the Father; since he is called *the Mighty God* and *the everlasting Father*, (Isa. ix. 6.) and his People are called *his Seed* (Chap. liii. 10.) and he is said to *give them Power to become the Sons of God.* (John i. 12.) And as he will *present them to himself a glorious Church*; (Eph. v. 27.) so he will present them as *his Children* to his Father, saying, *Behold, I, and the Children, which God has given me.* (Heb. ii. 13.)

will be his God and he shall be my Son.

the Victory over them, in humble Dependence on my Strengthnings, shall be possessed of an everlasting Inheritance of Glory, and of every Thing that can contribute to his Happiness: And I, the all-comprehending Good, and rightful Disposer of all Things, will be his God and Portion for ever; and he shall be Partaker of all the exalted Privileges of his Adoption, as my Son. (See the Note on *ver.* 5.)

8 *But the Fearful and Unbelieving, and the Abominable, and Murderers, and Whoremongers, and Sorcerers, and Idolaters, and all Liars shall have their Part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimstone: which is the second Death.*

8. But, on the contrary, they that are ashamed, or refuse to own and honour me, thro' Cowardise, or Fear of Reproaches and Sufferings on that Account; and they that reject the Grace of the Gospel, through Unbelief, and are distrustful of my Power, Mercy and Promises to support them under, and carry them through all Tribulations to eternal Glory; and flagitious Sinners, that indulge unnatural Lusts, like the detestable *Sodomites*; and Murderers in Heart or Deed, and especially infamous Persecutors of my People unto Death; and unclean Persons, that are addicted to Fornication or Adultery; and Dealers with familiar Spirits, or Pretenders so to be; and Worshipers of Images, or of any that are not by Nature God; and they, that speak Falsehoods and Lies in Hypocrisy, with intent to deceive and impose upon others; All and every one of these, living and dying in Impenitence and Unbelief, shall have their deserved Portion of the most exquisite Torments, like Persons thrown alive into a great Collection of burning-hot Materials, such as Fire and Brimstone; which may be called the second and most terrible Death, as it comes after the Death of the Body, and is an absolute Deprivation of all Comfort, and an endless intolerable Complication of all possible Misery.

9 *And there came unto me one of the seven Angels, which had the seven Vials full of the seven last Plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the Bride the Lamb's Wife.*

9. Then, to give me a further Account of the Blessedness of the Righteous, there drew near to me one of the seven Angels, that were represented in a former Vision, (*Chap.* xvi. 1, and xvii. 1.) as employed in executing the seven last Judgments, which were signified by pouring out the seven lasts Cups or Vials of the Wrath of God upon his Enemies for their Destruction; and he in a free and friendly Manner called to me, saying, Come up hither, and I will set before you a particular and distinct emblematical View of the State of the Church in her Advancement to heavenly Glory, suitable to her Dignity as the Bride, which Christ, the Lamb that was Slain, has purchased with his own Blood, and espoused to himself in an everlasting Covenant, that she, when fully prepared for him, by the Graces of his Spirit, might celebrate her Nuptials with him, as her glorious Husband, in all the Solemnity, Splendor and Joy of the highest Marriage-Festival.

10 *And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high Mountain, and shewed*

10. And this Angel, methought in the Visions of my Mind, conducted me to an exceeding great and lofty Mountain, to give me the Advantage of a clear and full Prospect; and there he exhibited to my View a grand and glorious

me that great City, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of Heaven from God.

rious City of vast Extent, and filled with an innumerable Multitude of Inhabitants, which, in Allusion to *Jerusalem's* being called *the holy City*, (Matth. iv. 5.) bears that Name, as being consecrated to God, and thorowly sanctified by his Spirit: And I distinctly beheld the Model of it, as coming down from God out of Heaven, the Habitation of his immediate Presence. (See the Note on *ver.* 2.)

11 *Having the Glory of God: and her Light* was *like unto a Stone most precious, even like a Jasper Stone, clear as Crystal;*

11. This City of the living God, the heavenly *Jerusalem*, was figured out to me as filled with the divine Glory, the visible Symbol of which formerly appeared in the *Jewish* Tabernacle and Temple, as the Token of God's dwelling in a Way of special Grace and Favour there: And its Light of Knowledge, Purity, Honour and Joy was illustriously bright, like a most excellent Stone, even like a splendid Jasper-Stone, as shining as Crystal.

12 *And had a Wall great and high,* and *had twelve Gates, and at the Gates twelve Angels, and Names written thereon, which are* the Names *of the twelves Tribes of the Children of Israel.*

12. And it was further represented to me, as a City of the greatest Beauty, Strength and Security, encompassed about with an exceeding thick and high Wall; Which may be considered as an Emblem of the almighty and invincible Power of the great God and Saviour, for the Safety and Defence of all its blessed Inhabitants: In the Wall there appeared twelve Gates of Entrance from all Quarters; Which might intimate that the only Door of Salvation by Jesus Christ had been opened, through all Parts of the Earth, in the Ministry of the twelve Apostles: And at the twelve Gates, methought, I saw twelve Angels, one at each Gate, standing as Guards of State at every Avenue of the City and Palace of the great King, and as ministring Spirits to open the Gates to all the Heirs of Salvation, and to shut them against all that were not written in the Lamb's Book of Life: (*ver.* 27.) And I saw an Inscription of Names, one upon each Gate, which represented the Names of the twelve Tribes of the Children of *Israel*; and may be considered as emblematical of the whole Church of Christ, which was typified by them, and consisted of all the spiritual *Israel*, that were admitted into this glorious City, there to abide for ever.

13 *On the East, three Gates; on the North, three Gates; on the South three Gates; and on the West, three Gates.*

13. The Position of these Gates on each Side of this large Four-square City (*ver.* 16.) appeared to be in the following Manner, answerable to *Ezekiel's* Vision of its Type, after the Names of the Tribes of *Israel.* (Ezek. xlviii. 31—34.) On the East Side were three Gates, upon which were written the Names of *Joseph*, *Benjamin* and *Dan*: On the North Side three Gates, upon which were written the Names of *Reuben*, *Judah* and *Levi*: On the South Side three Gates, upon which were written the Names of *Simeon*, *Issachar* and *Zebulon*: And on the West Side three Gates, upon which were written the Names of *Gad*, *Asher* and *Naphtali*, to intimate that none, who in Reality belong to the true *Israel* of God, shall be excluded from

from this *general Assembly and Church of the First-born.* (Heb. xii. 23.)

14 *And the Wall of the City had twelve Foundations, and in them the Names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb.*

14. And the wonderful Wall of this magnificent City was represented as having twelve Foundations, on which (in Allusion to the Custom of inscribing the Names of those that lay the first Stone in Buildings, for a perpetual Remembrance of them) there seemed to be written the Names of the twelve Apostles of Christ, the Lamb of God, who redeemed the Church with his own Blood, and was laid in the Doctrine and Ministrations of those first and chief Master-Builders, as its only Foundation, *Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner Stone.* (Eph. ii. 20.)

15 *And he that talked with me, had a golden Reed to measure the City, and the Gates thereof, and the Wall thereof.*

15. And the Angel that communed with me appeared, as having in his Hand a measuring Reed of pure Gold, a suitable Emblem of the pure and spotless State of this glorious City, and of all that pertained to it: With this, he took the Dimensions of the City itself, and of its Gates, and of its Wall; Which may be considered as a figurative Representation of its being a State of the most beautiful Order and Proportion; and that all Admissions to it, and Securities in it, are exactly according to the perfect Rule of the uncorrupted Word of God.

16 *And the City lieth four-square, and the Length is as large as the Breadth. And he measured the City with the Reed, twelve Thousand Furlongs. The Length, and the Breadth, and the Height of it are equal.*

16. And it appeared by the Measurement, that the City was just four-square, of the very same Dimensions every Way; the Length being exactly equal to the Breadth; Which might intimate the Perfection, Stability and Uniformity of that blessed State of the Church: And in measuring this heavenly City with the golden Reed, it was found to be in Compass Twelve Thousand Furlongs, which, reckoning Eight Furlongs to a Mile, are Fifteen Hundred Miles; each of the four Sides containing the Length of Three Hundred Seventy-five Miles; a City of prodigious Extent for the Reception of an innumerable Multitude of blessed Inhabitants, far, yea, incomparably far beyond all, that ever was known upon Earth. The Length and Breadth of it appeared to be exactly equal, one to the other *; and its Height bore a just Proportion to its Length and Breadth; Which may be considered as an Emblem of the vast Capaciousness of the heavenly City for receiving and accommodating the whole Church, when collected all together, and of its intire Harmony and Beauty in every Part.

* Mr. *Lowman* observes that it would be out of all Proportion to suppose, that either the Wall or Buildings of the City are to be understood as of equal Height with the Length and Breadth; and that the Numbers in this and the next Verse are evidently *typical.* (perhaps he meant *mystical*) In one, which is the Measure of the Breadth and Length of the City, the mystical Number Twelve, taken from the Twelve Apostles, is multiplied by a Thousand; and in the other, which seems to be the Measure of the Height of the Wall, the same mystical Number, Twelve, is multiplied into itself; and so the Height of the Wall is represented to be one Hundred Forty-four Cubits, which make about seventy-two Yards, according to the lesser Cubit, or about eighty-six Yards, according to the greater. (See his Notes on these two Verses.)

17. Then

17 *And he measured the Wall thereof, an hundred* and *forty* and *four Cubits, according to the Measure of a Man, that is, of the Angel.*

17. Then, methought, he proceeded to measure the Height of the Wall of this holy City, and found that it rose up, from the Foundation to the Top, One Hundred and Forty-four Cubits, according to the common Way of Men's measuring from the Elbow to the End of the Middle Finger, which is the same that was used by the Angel in measuring the Height of this Wall; and so it appeared to be out of all Danger of ever being scaled and invaded; and may be considered as a figurative Representation of the absolute Safety of the Saints in the heavenly World from all Assaults or Disturbances from their Enemies.

18 *And the Building of the Wall of it was of Jasper; and the City* was *pure Gold, like unto clear Glass.*

18. And the Materials of this unsurmountable Wall were represented in my Vision, not as consisting of any Thing so mean and brittle as Brick, or common Building-Stone; but of the most durable, sumptuous, strong and beautiful Jasper-Stone, to render it impregnable and secure against all Decay, as well as surprizingly magnificent; Which may be considered as an Emblem of the everlasting and unchangeable State of Blessedness and Glory: And the august Mansions of the City seem'd to be all made of massy Gold; or, at least, overlaid with the finest and purest Gold, so exquisitely polished, that it appeared as bright and glittering, as the most shining Mirror or clearest Crystal; Which may be consider'd as an Emblem of the incomparable Grandeur, Riches and Delights of the heavenly State.

19 *And the Foundations of the Wall of the City were garnished with all Manner of precious Stones. The First Foundation* was *a Jasper; the Second, a Sapphire; the Third, a Chalcedony; the Fourth, an Emerald;*

19, 20. And the Foundations of the City, which, tho' really but *one*, yet, having been laid by the Preaching of the twelve Apostles, were represented as Twelve: *(ver.* 14.) These, methought, were beautified and adorned with Inlayings of all Sorts of the most excellent, solid and dazzling Stones, one in one Part and another in another, in Allusion to the Names of the Twelve Tribes of *Israel*, which were severally engraven on the twelve precious Stones in the High Priest's Breastplate; *(Exod.* xxviii. 15—21) The Appearance of such precious Stones on the Foundations of this Wall might be considered as an Emblem of the Perfection, Glory and Preciousness of Christ, the only Foundation of the Church, on which their Names were in a Manner inscribed, as those, whom the Father had given him, and who are built upon him, as their Foundation †. The first Part of it was

† I cannot pretend to determine *what*, or whether any Thing *particularly*, was signified, in the mystical Way, by the Variety of these *precious Stones*.——But as far as I can learn from the best Accounts I have met with of the Stones *themselves*, The *Jasper* is a Stone of several Colours, the most excellent of which is Green, spotted with Red or Purple: The *Sapphire* is of a sky-colour'd Blue, transparent and very hard: The *Chalcedony* is of a shining Grey, clouded with Yellow, or Purple, or Blue: The *Emerald* is of an exceeding fine Green: The *Sardonix* is of a pale Red: The *Sardius* is like, if not the same with the *Cornelian* Stone of a Blood-Colour: The *Chrysolith* is Green, with a Shade of Yellow: The *Beryl* is of a pale Green: The *Topaz* is of a Gold-Colour, transparent and hard: The *Chrysoprasus* is of a yellywish Green: The *Jacinth* is of a Violet or Purple Colour: The *Amethyst* is of a Colour nearly resembling the *Jacinth*: And the *Pearl* is a round, white, hard and shining Substance; and is commonly bred in a Shell-fish.

repre-

represented as adorned with a *Jasper*; the Second, with a *Saphire*; the Third, with a *Chalcedony*; the Fourth, with an *Emerald*; the Fifth, with a *Sardonyx*; the Sixth, with a *Sardius*; the Seventh, with a *Chrysolith*; the Eighth, with a *Beryl*; the Ninth, with a *Topaz*; the Tenth, with a *Chrysoprasus*; the Eleventh, with a *Jacinth*; and the Twelfth, with an *Amethyst*: All which taken together, as being Stones of the most illustrious and valuable Kind, might figure out the Variety and Perfection of the Glory of Christ, the Foundation; and of the Church and its Blessings, that are founded upon him.

20 *The Fifth, a Sardonyx; the Sixth, a Sardius; the Seventh, a Chrysolite; the Eighth, a Beryl; the Ninth, a Topaz; the Tenth, a Chrysoprasus; the Eleventh, a Jacinth; the Twelfth, an Amethyst.*

21 *And the twelve Gates* were *twelve Pearls; every several Gate was of one Pearl: And the Street of the City* was *pure Gold, as it were transparent Glass.*

21. And the twelve Gates of this glorious City of the living God were represented to me, as consisting of twelve Pearls of the greatest Worth and astonishing Magnitude, each Gate being only one large Pearl; Which might be emblematical of Christ, as the Pearl of great Price, and the only Door of Salvation and of Entrance into Heaven: And, methought, I saw a large Opening that may be compared to a vastly spacious Street *, where the Inhabitants of the City met in full Assembly; the Pavement of which was of the finest burnished Gold, shining with a Lustre as clear and bright as Crystal; Which might be an Emblem of the perfect Purity, Pleasure and Conversation of the general Assembly and Church of the First-born, in their holy and delightful Communion one with another, and with their God in his immediate Presence.

22 *And I saw no Temple therein: For the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the Temple of it.*

22. And though the Allusion was all along to the City of *Jerusalem*; yet there was this remarkable Difference, I saw no Representation of a Temple in this heavenly *Jerusalem*, as there was in the *Millenium*-State itself, in which the *Temple of God was opened*: (See the Paraphrase on *Ch.* xi. 19) For the great and blessed Lord God omnipotent, and Jesus Christ, the Lamb that was slain, are instead of a Temple, as they dwell in an incomparably more glorious, visible and immediate Manner here, (*Chap.* xxii. 4) than ever was seen in the earthly Temple at *Jerusalem*, or in the latter Day-Glory; Which might intimate, that all divine Ordinances, as the appointed Mediums of Communion between God and his Church in this World, shall intirely cease in the heavenly State; when, instead of them, the immediate Presence of God essentially consider'd, as inclusive of Father, Son and Spirit, shall be *all in all*, (See the Note on 1 *Cor.* xv. 28) with no other Medium of conveying Felicity and Glory to the heavenly Citizens, than the Person of Christ, as Mediator and God-Man, in whom the Glory of all divine

* Dr. *Hammond* observes, that here, and *Chap.* xxii. 2, *The Street* or *broad Place* of the City denotes a *Place of Concourse and Resort*; and so *Synagogues*, or *Assemblies*, and *Streets* are used together in the same Sense, *Matth.* vi. 5. And *Grotius* understands *the Street of the City* to signify *a Place of public Assembly*, as in 2 *Chron.* xxxii, 6, and *Job* xxix. 7.

Counsels,

Counsels, Perfections and Performances, in their most amiable Aspect, will shine, as in their brightest Mirror, for ever.

23 *And the City had no need of the Sun, neither of the Moon to shine in it: For the Glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb* is *the Light thereof.*

23. And so illustrious was this City in my Vision, that there was no Manner of Occasion either for the Sun by Day, or the Moon by Night, to enlighten it; or for any Creature to adorn or comfort its Inhabitants, as there is in this World, and will be till the Dissolution of all Things: For the Glory of God himself, a Symbol of which was given in the *Shechinah* that filled *Solomon*'s Temple, (1 *Kings* viii. 10, 11) and in the *Transfiguration* of our blessed Lord, (*Matth.* xvii. 2, and 2 *Pet.* i. 17) shone in the most perfect Manner to illuminate the whole City; and the glorious Lamb, as in Office-Capacity, and clothed with human Nature, is the Purchaser of Admission to this Light, and the clear Medium of it; and as God, in essential Union with the Father and Spirit, inseparably concurs with them in diffusing it.

24 *And the Nations of them which are saved, shall walk in the Light of it: And the Kings of the Earth do bring their Glory and Honour into it.*

24. And those People of all Nations of the Earth, who, through Faith in the Blood of the Lamb, are saved from Sin and the Wrath to come, shall be admitted to enjoy its delightful and illustrious Light, and to walk in sweet and holy Communion together in the Midst of it. And as the converted Princes and Potentates of the Earth had employ'd all their Riches, Power and Honour to subserve the Interests of this celestial City; so they bring the Products of their good Influenence into it, and cheerfully resign up all their Dignity and Authority for it, counting them as nothing, in Comparison with it; the Glory of which, methought, appeared to be inexpressibly more grand and beautiful, than if all the Magnificence and precious Treasures of the Kingdoms of this World had been collected together to enrich and adorn it.

25 *And the Gates of it shall not be shut at all by Day: For there shall be no Night there.*

25. And so absolutely safe are the Inhabitants of this City in their sublime Mansions, not merely by the Height and Strength of its Walls, and the Guard of Angels, (*ver.* 12) but principally and supremely by the immediate Protection of the divine Presence, that there will be no need of shutting up its Gates in the Day-time, to secure them against invading Enemies; (as is usual to do by Cities on Earth, when any Danger threatens them) and if not in the Day, not at all: For there shall be no Night to favour any Attempts against them; nor the least Darkness of any Kind, whether natural, or civil, moral, or spiritual, to interrupt, or obscure the Light of Glory, that will perpetually shine with *Meridian*-Brightness upon them.

26 *And they shall bring the Glory and Honour of the Nations into it.*

26. And all that come to dwell there will bring the holy Fruits of their faithful Improvements of their Riches and Honours into it, and will gladly surrender for it whatever they had possessed of Wealth, Grandeur and Honour in any Nations of the lower World: All these Glories will be swallowed up in that, which infinitely excells them; and its Splendor may well be considered, as vastly superior to all that could be imagined, were all the Affluence, Gaiety and Magnificence of

the highest Ranks of People on Earth to be amassed together, and laid out to embellish it.

27 *And there shall in no wise enter into it any Thing that defileth, neither* whatsoever *worketh Abomination, or* maketh *a Lie: But they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.*

27. And so perfectly pure and holy is this heavenly City, that though its Gates are continually open; (*ver.* 25) yet, as the Uncircumcised and Unclean were forbid Entrance into the holy City of *Jerusalem*; (*Isa.* lii. 1) so no Person or Thing (παν); no evil Temper or Disposition, Thought, Word, or Deed, that is morally defiled by any Iniquity, or is of a defiling Nature, shall ever be permitted, on any Account whatsoever, to enter into it; nor any one that lives and dies in any known Sin, which, whatever it be, God is of *purer Eyes than to look upon it*, without Detestation; (*Habak.* i. 13) and particularly the Sin of *Idolatry*, which is, by way of Eminence, *the abominable Thing that he hates*; (Jer xliv. 4) nor any one that contrives, forges, or utters Falshoods with an Intent to deceive; not one of either of these: But they, and they only, (*Chap.* xx. 15) shall be admitted into this blissful State, that were register'd, as it were by Name, in the Lamb's Book of Life, which contains all those, that were given him by the Father, to be redeem'd, and sanctified, and brought safe to Glory, and that, by holy Fruits and Effects, sha'l be proved to be so in the great Day of Account.

Recollections.

Who can conceive the immense Felicity and Glory of the Church triumphant in Heaven? All the Images of Light, Beauty, Honour and Grandeur, and of Riches, Safety and Delight, that we are acquainted with, are but faint Representations of it. 'Tis all new, and surpassing every Thing that can be found, or imagined in the present Frame of the Universe. It is the holy City of the living God, shining in all his Glory; a City built on Christ, who was laid, as its only Foundation, by the Ministry of the twelve Apostles; and its Inhabitants consist of the whole Number of the Chosen and Redeemed, Called and Faithful, as collected together, and brought into it, from all Nations of the Earth; its Gates being open to them, who were typified by the twelve Tribes of *Israel*. It is a State of complete and immortal Bliss, absolutely secure, and free from all Darkness, Pain and Uneasiness of every Kind, and from Death itself; those former Things being passed away: And it is enliven'd with all the Joys and Honours of a public Solemnization of Christ's Marriage with his Church. It is inexpressibly more glorious than the most splendid City of beautiful, strong and lofty Walls, erected on solid Foundations, and all embellished as with the most precious glittering Stones; and magnificently adorned, as with Gates of the most costly Pearl, at which Angels stand, like Officers of State; and as if its Streets were all over paved with the finest polish'd Gold. All the Riches and Grandeur of the greatest Monarchs, and of all Nations of the Earth, are so far exceeded by it, swallowed up in it, and cheerfully resigned for it, as not worthy to be compared with its heavenly Treasures. It is illuminated, honoured and blessed with the immediate Presence of God and the Lamb, as shining with amiable and divine Majesty on their Throne of Glory, and as the Beginners and Perfecters of its Happiness; insomuch that it needs no Creature-Enjoyments, like the Sun and Moon; nor any Ordinances, like the Temple at *Jerusalem*, to assist its heavenly Entertainments: For God in Christ will be their God, and the everlasting Fountain of all that is great and good; and they shall inherit all Things, to the utmost of their Wishes, as the Gift of free Grace; and shall live together in holy, harmonious and transporting Fellowship with God, and Christ, and one another, in its ever-shining and unclouded Light But, alas! all that are ashamed of, or afraid to own the Lord, and every Unbeliever and habitual Liar, with all other impenitent Sinners, that are abominable in God's Sight, shall be utterly excluded from the heavenly State, and have their Portion in everlasting Burnings, which is the

second Death. But, in Opposition to these, all they, and none but they, that are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, as proved by its holy Fruits, shall be admitted to the sublime Enjoyments of this blessed City. These are the true and faithful Sayings of God, which shall certainly have their full Accomplishment, to the insupportable Misery of graceless Sinners, and the consummate Joy of Saints, for ever.

CHAP. XXII.

The Description of the heavenly State is carried on under the Figures of the Water and Tree of Life, and of the Throne of God and the Lamb, 1—5. *And, for a Conclusion of the whole, the Truth and certain Accomplishment of all these prophetic Visions are confirmed, by way of Dialogue between the conducting Angel, Christ himself, and the Apostle* John, *who was forbidden to worship the Angel, and ordered not to seal the Prophecies of this Book, which were soon to begin to be fulfilled in their Order, and are so sacred as not to be added to, or diminished, upon pain of Exclusion from all the Blessings promised in them, which shall be conferred on the Righteous, and denied to the Wicked, when Christ shall come (as he said he quickly would) with a Reward to every one, according to his Works,* 6—16. *To which the Spirit and the Bride say, Come; and* John *adds his Amen, and closes all with the usual apostolic Benediction,* 17—21.

TEXT.

1 AND *he shewed me a pure River of Water of Life, clear as Crystal, proceeding out of the Throne of God, and of the Lamb.*

PARAPHRASE.

1. AND the conducting Angel gave me some further emblematical Representations of the heavenly *Jerusalem*, by a Vision of a pure River, as clear as Crystal, streaming freely and plentifully out of the Fountain of the Water of Life, (*Ch.* xxi. 6) not thro' Ordinances, but immediately from the Throne of God and the Lamb, who are *one* in the divine Nature, and whose Throne, as divine Persons, is *one*, from whence all Blessings are derived in their utmost Purity and Perfection unto eternal Life; Which, in Allusion to the River that watered the Garden of *Eden*, (Gen. ii. 10) or to the Waters in *Ezekiel*'s Vision, (*Chap.* xlvii. 1—12) may be considered as an Emblem of *the Fulness of Joy*, that is in God's immediate *Presence*, and of the immense *Pleasures, that are at his Right-Hand for evermore.* (Ps. xvi. 11.)

2 *In the midst of the Street of it, and on either Side of the River,* was there *the*

2. In the midst of the chief Place of Concourse, or principal Street of the heavenly City, (See the Note on *Chap.* xxi. 21) and on each Side of the River which watered it, methought, there stood a delightful Row of a most excellent Kind of Trees *, like those that

* Mr. *Kennicott* thinks that this *Tree of Life* alludes to the *Trees on one Side, and on the other of the River* in *Ezekiel*'s Vision, rather than to the Tree of Life in *Paradise*. (See his *Dissertation* on the Tree of Life, p. 93—97.) And yet he conjectures that *the Tree of Life* in *Paradise* was not a *single*, or *one particular extraordinary Tree*; (p. 75) and shews (p. 81) that the Word (עץ) *a Tree*, which is *singular*, is used *plurally*, and render'd *Trees*, Gen. iii. 2, 8; and signifies the whole *Genus* of Trees, through the History of the Creation and Fall; unless where it it is confined by the emphatic Article, or a necessary Restriction in the Sense.—But, perhaps, *John*'s Vision was only of one Tree of Life, whose Branches extended to both Sides of the River.

Tree of Life, which bare twelve Manner *of Fruits,* and *yielded her Fruit every Month: And the Leaves of the Tree* were *for the Healing of the Nations.*

Ezekiel saw, in his Vision, *on the Bank of the River, one on one Side, and one on the other*; (Chap. xlvii. 7, 12) Which may also be considered, in Allusion to the Tree of Life in the midst of the earthly Paradise, (*Gen.* ii. 9) as an Emblem of Christ, and of the immortal Life of Happiness, which all its Inhabitants derive from him: And, in this figurative Way, he was represented, in Allusion to the twelve Tribes of *Israel*, and the twelve Apostles of the Lamb, (*Chap.* xxi. 12, 14) as yielding twelve Sorts of Fruit, to signify the greatest Variety and Abundance of the most delicious, spiritual and heavenly Entertainments to the full Satisfaction of *all* the *Israel* of God, according to the Doctrine of the holy Apostles: And this emblematical Tree produced its pleasant ripe Fruits, not once a Year only, like common Trees; but continually, Month after Month, without the least Intermission, or Defect, for ever: And such was the excellent Virtue of this Tree of Life, that its very Leaves had a sovereign Efficacy to perfect and maintain perpetual Health and Ease, and to prevent all Infirmities, Pains and Diseases in the Souls, or Bodies of the Saints, that were admitted to partake of it, from among the various Nations of the Earth.

3 *And there shall be no more Curse: But the Throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his Servants shall serve him,*

3. Yea, so absolutely complete and confirmed is their Happiness, that the Curse, together with all its dismal Effects and Consequences, which the Fall brought upon all Mankind, and which came upon their first Parents in the Garden of *Eden*, (Gen. iii. 16—19) shall be actually, thoroughly and finally removed from them for ever; so that there shall be no Remainder of Sin or Sorrow, or any accursed Person or Thing there: But the glorious Throne of God and of the Lamb, whose divine Throne is *one*, shall be ever abiding in it, as the Fountain of its Felicity and Delight, (*ver.* 1) without Mixture or Allay; and his faithful Servants shall pay their solemn Homage in the sublimest Adorations and Praises, and shall do the Will of their God and Saviour in the most perfect Manner, with all Alacrity, Constancy and Delight.

4 *And they shall see his Face; and his Name* shall be *in their Foreheads.*

4. And they shall have a beatific Vision of the blessed God, like *seeing Face to Face*; (Matth. v. 8, and 1 Cor. xiii. 12) and shall behold the Lord Jesus in all his Glory, as God-Man, and *see him as he is* with their bodily Eyes, as well as with the Eyes of their Minds; (*John* xvii. 24, and 1 *John* iii. 2) and, *beholding his Face in Righteousness, they shall bear his Likeness*, (Ps. xvii. 15) as conspicuously as if his Name and the Characters of his glorious and holy Image were written on their Foreheads, in like Manner as *Holiness to the Lord* was engraven on *Aaron*'s Mitre, which was put upon his Forehead. (*Exod.* xxviii. 36—38.)

5 *And there shall be no Night there; and they need no Can-*

5. And so illustrious will be their Light of Knowledge, Purity and Joy, that there shall not be the least Darkness of Error, Sin or Affliction; and such will be the Perfection of

dle, neither Light of the Sun; for the Lord God giveth them Light: And they shall reign for ever and ever.

this Light, that they will have no Occasion for Creature-Assistances to add to their Comfort, such as the Light of a Candle, which is wont in this World to relieve the Darkness of the Night; or the Light of the Sun in the Firmament to enlighten it by Day; Which may be considered as emblematical Intimations that they shall neither have any need of the faint Light of the ceremonial Law; no, nor of the clearer Light of the Gospel, and of its Ordinances of divine Worship: For the Lord Jehovah himself is the immediate Fountain of Light to irradiate and fill them with his Glory, that *in his Light they may see Light*, in all its beauteous and transforming Manifestations: (*Ps.* xxxvi. 9) And they shall reign, like Kings on their Thrones, with Dignity and Honour in his blissful Presence to all Eternity, which will make them a rich Amends for all the Tribulations, that they endured with Faith and Patience on Earth for his Name's sake. (See 2 *Cor.* iv. 17.)

6 *And he said unto me, These Sayings* are *faithful and true. And the Lord God of the holy Prophets sent his Angel to shew unto his Servants the Things which must shortly be done.*

6. And the conducting Angel, having led me through the Visions, which ended in the final Happiness and Glory of the Saints, said to me, All the Things that you have heard and seen, and recorded for the Use, Encouragement and Benefit of the Church in all Ages, shall be faithfully accomplished, and are infallibly true, to be fulfilled in their Order And the Lord Jesus, who in his original Nature is, with the Father and Spirit, the only living and true God, (See the Note on *Chap.* i. 1) and who inspired and authorised his holy Prophets of old to foretel the Things which were revealed to them, relating to his Sufferings, and the Glory that should follow, (1 *Pet.* i. 11) has sent me, his Angel, with these divine Messages to make known to his Servants, of the New Testament-Church, the Things which shall begin to be performed very soon after this Revelation of them, till they be gradually completed in their proper Series; and the Fulfilment of them all will be in a little Space of Time, compared with Eternity, when they will issue in the consummate Happiness of the Followers of the Lamb.

7 *Behold, I come quickly: Blessed* is *he that keepeth the Sayings of the Prophecy of this Book.*

7. In further Confirmation of all these Things, Jesus himself spake, (*ver.* 16, 20) saying, Observe with Attention, Admiration and Joy, I am just ready to begin the Accomplishment of them, and to carry them on in their proper Order, till all shall be fulfilled; and, comparatively speaking, I will e'er long come, to put an End to all the Troubles of my People, and perfect their Felicity in the heavenly State. He is a happy Creature indeed, and shall be inexpressibly so for ever, who, in the several Periods of Accomplishment, carefully considers and cheerfully embraces, and behaves suitable to the holy, encouraging and comfortable Design of the Revelations, which are made in the Prophecies recorded in this Book, for the Use of the Church in all Ages, till the whole Scene shall be finished.

8 *And I John saw these Things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the Feet of the Angel, which shewed me these Things.*

8. And I *John*, to whom the Revelations were made, had all along visionary Prospects of all these important Things, and heard what was said to explain and confirm them. And when in this Manner I had been informed of all the Particulars that have been recited, I was wonderfully affected with them, and in a sudden Rapture, which almost overpower'd my Mind, (See the Note on *Chap.* xix. 10) I again, through want of recollecting my former Error and Rebuke for it, prostrated myself, in a Posture of Adoration, at the Feet of the Angel, who, by Christ's Commission, as I afterwards found, (*ver.* 9.) had discovered these Things to me.

9 *Then saith he unto me,* See thou do it *not: For I am thy Fellow-Servant, and of thy Brethren the Prophets, and of them which keep the Sayings of this Book. Worship God.*

9. Upon his perceiving this, he instantly reproved, and prevented me, saying, Take heed of paying any religious Homage to me, who have no Claim to it: For I am not Jesus the Saviour, but only one of his Servants, that worship, and adore him, and do his Will; and am not the Author of these Revelations, but a Messenger, like yourself, to communicate them to you, as you are to do to the Church; and I have herein only acted the Part of a Fellow-Servant with you, and with your Brethren in Office, the Prophets, Apostles and Ministers of the Gospel, and with the Saints, that shew a just Regard to the Things delivered in this prophetic Book. Let therefore all your Adoration, or religious Worship, be paid to the only true God, to whom alone it is due: For the Nature of Things, and the divine Command have fixed an unalterable Obligation to *worship the Lord thy God, and him only* to *serve.* (Mat. iv. 10.)

10 *And he saith unto me, Seal not the Sayings of the Prophecy of this Book: For the Time is at Hand.*

10. And the Angel, or rather Christ himself *, charged me, not to conceal the Things contained in this Prophecy, as though they were to be sealed up in the Book which I had wrote, and so hid from the Notice of the Church, relating to the Troubles they are to expect, and the glorious Issues of them: For the Time draws nigh, (said he) in which they shall begin to take Place, and be carried on in a due Series, till they all be fulfilled, which, compared with the succeeding Eternity, will be but a little while hence.

11 *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: And he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: And he*

11. Then the State and Condition of all Mankind shall be unalterably fix'd, never to admit of any After-Change; but the decisive irreversible Sentence shall go forth, saying, He that is destitute of Righteousness to give him Acceptance with God, as found to be an Evil-doer, Let him for

* As *Christ* had spoke, *v.* 7; so in this and the next Verse, (unless we make them and *ver.* 8, 9. a Parenthesis) *the same Person* seems to be the Speaker, who again said, *Behold I come quickly,* &c. ver. 12. And the Things here delivered are the more solemnly inforced, on Supposition of their being pronounced immediately by the Lord Jesus himself, as giving the Charge that this *Revelation* should be made known for the Use of the Church, and as foretelling the Condition of Sinners and Saints in Consequence of it; (*ver.* 11) which some, taking the *imperative* for the *future* Tense, consider as a *Prophecy* of the different Effects, that this Revelation would have upon them respectively; while others (to whom I incline) consider it as a *Sentence,* that will fix their State and Temper at the *final Judgment.*

ever

that is Righteous, let him be Righteous still: and he that is Holy, let him be Holy still.

ever remain in that deplorable State: And he that is under the prevailing Defilement of Sin, Let him never be cured of his loathsome Disease: And, on the other hand, he that is righteous before God for Justification to eternal Life, and appears to be so by his Fruits of Righteousness, Let him stand for ever justified in his Presence: And he that is renewed and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, Let him be for ever *holy, without Blemish, Spot or Wrinkle or any such Thing*. (Eph. v. 27.) What every one now is he shall be unchangeably, for Misery, or Happiness, to all Eternity.

12 *And behold, I come quickly; and my reward* is *with me, to give every Man according as his Work shall be.*

12. And the more strongly to assure the Church of this, and to impress them with it, for their Encouragement and Joy, Behold, said the blessed Jesus again, (See *ver.* 7.) I am speedily coming at the appointed Time, which shall not tarry, but hastens apace, to bring all Things to their final Issue. And according to antient Prophecies of my coming with my Reward, (*Isa.* xl. 10, and lxii. 11.) I, who as Mediator and Judge of the whole World, have all Power in Heaven and Earth, will then distribute Rewards of Grace to the Righteous and Holy, and inflict condign Punishment on the Unrighteous and Filthy; and will impartially deal with every One, *according* to the Nature and Proportion of *what he has done in his Body*, whether it be *Good or Bad*, (2 Cor. v. 10.) as it shall then be found to be.

13 *I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the last.*

13. And still further to confirm all this, beyond Doubt, he again asserted his own divine and mediatorial Characters, as he had before (*Chap.* i. 8, 11. See the Note on *ver.* 8. there) saying, As the *Greek* Alphabet begins with *Alpha*, and ends with *Omega*; so all Dispensations of Providence and Grace, as well as the Creation itself, begin and end in me, as the Author and Finisher of them; and I, who eternally existed before them, and shall do so unchangeably after them, will give them their final Period at my second coming.

14 *Blessed* are *they that do his Commandments, that they may may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the Gates into the City.*

14. Then it shall appear with uncontroulable Evidence, that they are, and for ever shall be, unspeakably happy, who conscientiously attend to, and, from a Principle of Faith and Love, sincerely observe the Commandments of God, in all moral Obedience, together with all Gospel-Institutions, and the Duties, which the Lord Jesus has enjoined in this prophetic Book, who will be their Judge at the last Day, that they, being hereby proved to be my true and faithful Disciples, may have the Dignity and Authority (ἐξουσία) by my free Grant, (*Chap.* ii. 7.) and it may be lawful for them, to partake of all the great and glorious Blessings, that are produced by the Tree of Life; (See the Paraphrase on *ver.* 2.) and, in Consequence thereof, may have Admission through the Gates which are ever open for them, and them only, to enter into the City of God above. (*Chap.* xxi. 21, 25.)

15. For

15 *For without are Dogs, and Sorcerers, and Whoremongers, and Murderers, and Idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a Lie.*

15. For the Wicked and Ungodly of every Character shall be shut out, and utterly excluded from all the Honours and delightful Entertainments of this glorious City; as particularly, such Sinners and Antichristian-Enemies, as for their Impurities, Opposition to the Truth, and Persecutions of the Saints, may be likned to filthy, fierce and voracious Dogs; (See *Matth.* vii. 6, and *Phil.* iii. 2.) as also Pretenders to Conjuring and Witchcraft; and unclean Persons that addict themselves to Fornication, or Adultery; and Blood-thirsty Murderers, that maliciously and unlawfully take away the Life of others, or persecute any to Death for Righteousness Sake; and Worshipers of Images and false Gods, or of the true God by external Symbols contrary to his Institution; and whoever he be that contrives, has Pleasure in, and designedly utters any Falsehood to impose upon, and deceive his Fellow-Creatures; all which may be reckoned among the notoriously abounding Crimes of the popish Party: Whosoever lives and dies under the Guilt of any of these Sins shall *be cast into outer Darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth.* (Matth. xxii. 13. See also *Rev.* xxi. 8.)

16 *I Jesus have sent mine Angel to testify unto you these Things in the Churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David,* and *the bright and morning Star.*

16. Then the Lord Jesus, to satisfy me that I was under no Delusion, and to add the greater Weight and Authority to all that I had seen and heard, directed his Words to me, saying, I Jesus the Sovereign Lord of Angels, and the Lord God of the Prophets, (See the Paraphrase on *ver.* 6.) it is I myself who employed my angelic Messenger to communicate all these Things to you, that they may be declared, as a Testimony from me (ἐπὶ ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις) concerning the Churches, and in and among them of this and all succeeding Generations to the End of the World. I, who have done this, neither will, nor can deceive you: For I, as God, am the Root, Lord and Source of *David*'s Family and Kingdom; and, as Man, am *David*'s Son, truely descended from his Loins: (*Matth.* xxii. 42—45.) And, as was prophesied of the Messiah, (*Numb.* xxiv. 17.) I *am the Star out of* Jacob, like the bright and Morning Star, and the *Sun of Righteousness* shining in all my Glory; (*Malach.* iv. 2.) I have arose to put a total End to the Night of Antichristianism, and to scatter all the Darkness of Ignorance and Error, Sin and Sorrow; and to usher in an eternal Day of Light, Purity and Joy with unclouded Lustre.

17 *And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth, say, Come. And let him that is a-thirst, come: And whosoever will,*

17. And as these are Matters of the greatest Consequence, for assuring the People of God of the certain Destruction of all their Enemies, and of their own complete and eternal Salvation, the Spirit of Prophecy hereby testifies his Approbation of it, and doth the same, as he is the holy Spirit that speaks in the Hearts of Believers; and they, the Lamb's Wife, inclusive of the Church militant and trium-

let him take the Water of Life freely.

triumphant, say with earnest Desire and Expectation, *Come Lord Jesus (ver. 20.)* in all thy Glory, to fulfil thy gracious Promises, and solemnize the Marriage with thine espoused Bride. *(Chap.* xxi. 2. 9.) And let every one that hears, understands and believes the Things contained in this Prophecy, join with the Spirit and Bride in saying, *Come Lord Jesus:* And let every one that thirsts after Righteousness, and after the everlasting Happiness, which shall be brought to the Church at the Revelation of Jesus Christ, (1 *Pet.* i. 13.) come by Faith to him for these most excellent of all Blessings: And whose Heart soever is inclined and desirous to be made Partaker of them, let him come and welcome, to refresh his weary Soul by drinking *gratis*, without Money and without Price, of the ever flowing and overflowing Water of Life, which springs from him, *(Chap.* xxi. 6.) and will be a Fountain of all divine Consolation, in its utmost Fulness for ever, at his second Coming to complete the Prophecies of this Book, which are to be believed, just as they are here revealed.

18 *For I testify unto every Man that heareth the Words of the Prophecy of this Book, If any Man shall add unto these Things, God shall add unto him the Plagues that are written in this Book:*

18. For I, the divine Author of this Revelation, *(ver.* 20.) and *the faithful and true Witness*, (Chap. iii. 14.) do solemnly declare to every one that hears the Prophecies contained in this Book, relating to the Affairs of the Church and the World, which shall end in the final Destruction of mine Enemies and the complete Salvation of my People, If any one, be his Character what it will, shall presume to add any pretended Visions or Revelations contrary to these; or shall wilfully pervert their Meaning, by putting false Interpretations upon them, God will certainly inflict upon him the dreadful Punishments, that are threatned in this Book, and particularly all those, that are denounced against Impostors and Deceivers.

19 *And if any Man shall take away from the Words of the Book of this Prophecy, God shall take away his Part out of the Book of Life, and out of the holy City, and* from *the Things which are written in this Book.*

19. And if, on the contrary, any one shall dare to detract from, or go about wilfully to explain away, set aside, or nullify any Part of the Writings, or of the Things written in this prophetic Book, or shall perversely deny its divine Authority, God, in his just Resentment, will certainly cut him off from the Interest, that he professed, or hoped, or *seemed to have*, (Luke viii. 18.) in the Lamb's Book of Life; *(Chap.* xxi. 27.) and from all the Blessings of the heavenly and holy *Jerusalem*, and all the great and glorious Things, which are promised in this prophetic Book to them *that overcome*, and *are faithful unto Death*; (Chap. ii. 7, 10, 17, and iii. 5, 12, 21.) He shall be for ever excluded from them: All which may be considered as a solemn and awful Sanction to confirm, not only the divine Authority of this Book, but of the whole of the New Testament-Revelation, as it closes its Canon, in like Manner, as *Moses* guarded the divine Authority of the Law, *(Deut.* iv. 2, and xii. 32.) and as God him-

felf did the like, in clofing up the Canon of the Old Teftament. (*Malac.* iv. 4.)

20 *He which teftifieth thefe Things, faith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even fo, come Lord Jefus.*

20. The Lord Jefus, who is the Author of the whole of this Revelation, and fo folemnly confirms it, (*ver.* 18, 19.) fays, for the Encouragement and Comfort of the Church under all their intermediate Trials and Afflictions, I am certainly coming, without Delay, as foon as ever Things are ripe, which will be ere long, for their perfect and everlafting Happinefs, and for the utter Deftruction of all their Enemies, at the laft Day. Hereupon I, the Writer of thefe Prophecies, to exprefs my Faith, together with my earneft Defire and Hope of it, faid, *Amen*, in like Manner as the whole Church fhould cheerfully eccho back to his Voice, faying, So we rejoice and long to have it, and are fully fatisfied it will be, Come Lord Jefus in all thy Glory; Come quickly, as thou haft faid, for our Help, Deliverance and complete Salvation.

21 *The Grace of our Lord Jefus Chrift be with you all Amen.*

21. In the mean while, to conclude the whole with an apoftolic Benediction, fuitable to the State of the Church, and to the Duties incumbent upon it, during its Afflictions and Trials on Earth, May the free Love or Favour of our Lord and Saviour Jefus Chrift, and all its fpecial Fruits and Bleffings, richly abound, and be manifefted, in all feafonable Supplies of Grace and Strength, Support, Guidance and Confolation, to all and every one of you in every Age, who love, look and long for his fecond Coming! So may it be! and in Teftimony of my great Defire, Hope and Affurance of its being fo, I heartily fay, and let them all join with me in faying, *Amen.*

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a Fulnefs of Joy fhall Chrift's faithful Followers have in the heavenly *Jerufalem*, to banifh all their Sorrows! There they fhall drink at the Fountain-Head of the Water of Life, which proceeds from the Throne of God and the Lamb, as in the Midft of them; and fhall be ever feafting on the various, abundant and delicious Fruits of Chrift's Love and Purchafe, as the Tree of Life; and be perfectly free from all Maladies of Soul and Body, and from all the dreadful Effects and Confequences of the original Curfe: They fhall be publicly known and owned to be the Lord's; and fhall dwell in the Light of his immediate Prefence, and behold his Face in Righteoufnefs, without any Cloud or Darknefs at all. And O with what uninterrupted Conftancy, Cheerfulnefs and Delight will they then worfhip, ferve and glorify him! And with what Dignity and Honour reign with him for ever and ever! How unfpeakable is the Happinefs of thofe, that faithfully obferve, and behave in a due Correfpondence to the Prophecies of this Book, which is laid open to be read and confidered, for the Support and Comfort of the Church under all it's prefent Troubles! They who, upon Trial, fhall be found true Believers, by the Fruits of their Faith, in confcientioufly obferving the Commands of God, fhall be authorized and qualified to partake of all the Bleffednefs of the celeftial World, and be admitted to an Enjoyment of it: But all the Wicked and Ungodly, of every Character, fhall be caft into outer Darknefs. The State and Condition of every one fhall be finally decided, for Happinefs, or Mifery, at Chrift's fecond Coming; and they who fhall then be unrighteous and defiled, on one hand, or righteous and holy, on the other, fhall continue to be fo for ever. O folemn Thought! How certain and important are thefe great Events! They are teftified by the Apoftle *John*, and

and by the Angel, who conducted him in his Visions, as his Fellow-Servant, but not as an Object of religious Worship, which is due to God only; yea, by Jesus Christ himself, who introduces the eternal Day of Light and Glory, like the illustrious Morning-Star; and who, as the Lord God of the Prophets, sent his Angel to communicate these Things, and declared, again and again, that he would quickly come to execute them, in Judgment and in Mercy, till they all shall be fulfilled at the great Day of Account. How dangerous is it to add to, detract from, pervert, or deny these sacred Records, or any other Part of the Word of God! We should dread doing any Thing like either of these, as ever we would escape the Torments threatned, and inherit the Blessings promised, in this Book. And how certainly may we depend on Christ's coming, ere long, with his Rewards of Justice and Grace to every one, according to his Works, whether they be good or bad! With a View hereunto he says, *Surely I come quickly.* And what is the Language of the Spirit in his Word, and in the Hearts of Believers, and their Language under his Influence, but *Amen*, even so come Lord Jesus? In the mean while, How indearing and encouraging are Gospel-Invitations to thirsty Souls to come by Faith to Christ, and drink at free Cost and abundantly of the Water of Life! That we severally may do so, while we are under the Dispensation of Gospel-Grace, May the free Love and Favour of our Lord Jesus Christ, and every happy Fruit and Manifestation thereof, be continually with us all! *Amen.*

AN

AN ALPHABETICAL TABLE OF THE

Principal Things contained in the Paraphraſe, and eſpecially in the Notes, of this and the two former Volumes.

N. B. p. ſtands for *Paraphraſe* and n. for *Notes*.

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